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# The Targeting of Undocumented Latino Immigrants by Active Street Offenders

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ABSTRACT

THE TARGETING OF UNDOCUMENTED LATINO IMMIGRANTS BY ACTIVE STREET  
OFFENDERS

BY

KRYSTLELYNN CARABALLO

Committee Chair: Dr. Volkan Topalli

Committee Members: Dr. Richard Wright

Dr. Scott Jacques

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Immigrants, particularly those lacking formal documentation, have increasingly been stereotyped as increasing crime rates, stealing employment from American citizens, abusing social services, and, since the 1990s, as being of Mexican descent. In an effort to address many of the public and political concerns, legislation since the 1990s has criminalized many immigration infractions, reduced access for law enforcement through partnerships with immigration enforcement, and reduced rights for immigrants facing deportation proceedings. Collectively, these policies have created a population of vulnerable targets who are unable turn to the police if victimized and may face additional legal sanctions if reported. Media and scholar reports suggest that undocumented immigrants are increasingly targeted by predatory street offenders for robbery, burglary, and carjacking. This study utilizes interviews from 11 active street offenders to understand if, and to what extent, street offenders target “Mexicans.” This study also sought to parallel the existing literature scholars utilizing interviews with undocumented victims of street crime. I compare previous academic hypotheses regarding

immigrant vulnerability with the perceptions of vulnerability by street offenders. The results support the notion that undocumented immigrants are explicitly targeted by street offenders, support the use of Routine Activities Theory as an explanatory mechanism for immigrant victimization, and provide preliminary support for several hypotheses regarding perceived immigrant vulnerability. The results also support the notion that street offenders stereotype undocumented immigrants as being of Latino descent, that offenders are differently motivated by perceived immigration status and criminal involvement, and, to a lesser extent, utilize mainstream stereotypes to justify victimization.

THE TARGETING OF UNDOCUMENTED LATINO IMMIGRANTS BY ACTIVE STREET  
OFFENDERS

By

KRYSTLELYNN CARABALLO

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Science  
in the  
Andrew Young School of Policy Studies  
of  
Georgia State University

GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY  
2017

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KrystleLynn Caraballo

2017

## ACCEPTANCE

This thesis was prepared under the direction of the candidate's Thesis Committee. It has been approved and accepted by all members of that committee, and it has been accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Masters in Criminal Justice in the Andrew Young School of Policy Studies of Georgia State University.

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December 2017

## DEDICATION

For the immigrant victims of interpersonal and structural violence. I may not understand your struggles, but I hear your pleas.

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## **Chapter I: Introduction**

### *Problem Statement: Immigrant Victimization*

Obtaining legal immigration status in the United States is often an arduous, time consuming, and expensive process that many prospective immigrants are unable or unwilling to attempt. Studies that have interviewed undocumented immigrants suggest that they report migrating to the United States for primarily economic reasons. With visa limits and waitlists sometimes decades long (Golash-Boza, 2015; Shihadeh & Barranco, 2010a) many seek to bypass the formal process of applying for citizenship and enter into or remain in the United States illegally. Additionally, some migrants whose initial intention was to return to their homeland have opted to settle in the US for fear of being unable to return (Shihadeh & Barranco, 2010a). Undocumented status closes the door to many services, opportunities, and protections afforded by legal status while increasing the likelihood of victimization or abuse throughout the immigration process, leading up to and after they have entered the country. Depending on their mode of entry into the US, the immigration process is fraught with potential for victimization and many immigrants and refugees, unfortunately, have endured trauma at every stage (Chicco & Congress, 2015).

Polyvictimization, defined as the experience of multiple forms of victimization, is highly probable among undocumented immigrants. Starting from the violence in the country of origin, to violence and dangers during migration, (Androff & Tavassoli, 2012; Chapkis, 2003; Martinez & Valenzuela Jr, 2006), including robbery, victimization by smugglers (known as coyotes) or other migrants (Negi, Cepeda, & Valdez, 2013) as well as targeting by vigilante groups (Navarro, 2008), and abuse by border patrol agents (Trevino, 1998). Unfortunately, victimization does not cease once immigrants arrive on American soil. Their legal status, location of

settlement, demographic background, and other factors influence undocumented workers' reluctance to seek legal aid post victimization (Valenzuela Jr, 2006). Many do not file formal complaints or police reports to avoid placing themselves and their family at risk for deportation. This contributes to the Dark Figure of Crime, the unknown proportion of crime and victimization not recorded in formal crime statistics.

Researchers dating back to the early 1900s have recognized the vulnerability of immigrants (Von Hentig, 1948), however, the vulnerability of undocumented immigrants is particularly acute with the passing of legislation in the 1990s reducing the rights and access to services to undocumented residents. Risk factors unique to undocumented immigrants and the deterioration of legal protections have perpetuated a deep-rooted fear of and lack of trust toward outgroup members. Beyond an immigrant/ non-immigrant distinction, this population shies away from occupations typically associated with guardianship and protection, including police, medical professionals, lawyers, and social workers (Villalón, 2010) in addition to other groups they deemed untrustworthy, such as African Americans (Cepeda et al., 2012).

Undocumented immigrants carry with them multiple attributes – their illegal status, lack of formal education, ignorance of the law, poor language skills, and the intense fear of family separation through deportation -- that are risk factors for numerous interrelated forms of victimization. This has been documented through research on employer exploitation (Theodore, Valenzuela, & Meléndez, 2006) and domestic violence (Erez, 2000; Erez, Adelman, & Gregory, 2009). Less studied, but equally important are those instances where undocumented workers fall prey to predatory street crime (e.g., robbery, burglary, theft, etc.). Further, these same factors also increase their vulnerability to revictimization, defined as the repeated experiences of the same form of victimization (such as theft). The stigma of being “illegal,” vulnerable, and without

access to legal recourse for victimization may increase the frequency of victimization experiences. Extant research is scarce, scattered across disciplines, concentrated on certain forms of victimization, and often fail to distinguish between documented and undocumented immigrants.

### *Overview*

Previous scholars have summarized the history of immigration policy dating as far back as the 1800s elsewhere (Hing, 1998). The summary below will focus on the 1990s through 2017, as this period is most likely to have directly influenced current mainstream beliefs about Latino undocumented immigrants, the population of interest in the current study. This segment is divided into the following timeframes: 1990- 2001, post September 11, 2001, Obama Administration (2008-2016), and the Trump Administration (January-October 2017). Intentionally divided into uneven intervals, each period accounts for major historical social events that shifted social perception of immigrants. These periods highlight phenomenon further discussed in later chapters including stereotyping, criminalization, and diminished access to services.

### *Immigration Policy: 1990-2000*

In the 1990s, a string of policies shifted the direction of immigration enforcement. The two main pieces of legislation, the 1996 Antiterrorism and Effective Death Penalty Act (AEDPA) and the 1996 Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act (IIRIRA), targeted undocumented criminals. AEDPA “gives local police the authority to arrest previously deported noncitizen felons...” (Provine, Varsanyi, Lewis, & Decker, 2016). IIRIRA contained “border-enforcement provisions, increased penalties for transporting immigrants, deportation procedures, and rules on government support for immigrants.” (Provine et al., 2016). IIRIRA

authorized ICE “to enter into written agreements under which state or local enforcement agencies may perform, at their own expense and under the supervision of ICE officers, certain functions of an immigration officer in relation to the investigation, apprehension, or detention of aliens in the United States.” (Cruz, 2012). IIRIRA sought to strengthen federal immigration enforcement by enlisting local police as a “force multiplier” and authorized the training of local and state police to enforce federal immigration laws (Provine et al., 2016). Initially, these policies, known as the 287(g) agreements, were framed as a request for partnership, not a command. However, Operations Secure Community later replaced the programs and mandated local participation by way of including an immigration check during an arrestee’s booking process.

As immigration reforms were unfolding, major law enforcement groups, research foundations associated with policing, and even the US Government Accountability Office criticized the 287(g) program, claiming that it would “undermine trust in local law enforcement” and the “biggest fear was that members of immigrant communities would become afraid to call the police when they were witnesses or victims to crimes.” (Provine et al., 2016). Indeed not only has research consistently shown that immigrants are fearful to contact law enforcement for victimization (Bucher, Manasse, & Tarasawa, 2010; Cepeda et al., 2012; Fussell, 2011; Negi et al., 2013), they also perceive law enforcement as biased and unconcerned with their plights (Menjívar & Bejarano, 2004; Messing, Becerra, Ward-Lasher, & Androff, 2015; Vidales, Day, & Powe, 2009).

### *Immigration Policy: Post September 11, 2001*

Prior to September 11, 2001, only one agency in a study of 69 reported that they were required to report undocumented immigrants to the Immigration and Naturalization Service (now

known as ICE; Davis, Erez & Avitable, 2001). In many cases, “cooperation” with federal enforcement shifted from reporting an undocumented criminal arrested for a crime to simply transferring a case to ICE if it involved an undocumented individual. Based on interviews with undocumented victims, some scholars have suggested that law enforcement officials indiscriminately transfer cases to ICE when the *victim* is undocumented (Bucher et al., 2010; Villalón, 2010), further solidifying immigrant victims’ fear of reporting. As of October 2017, there are only four states where an undocumented immigrant victim’s case cannot be transferred to ICE for reporting (or committing) a crime and 26 states where “sanctuary cities” or counties provide protection against reporting undocumented immigrants to ICE. In Provine and colleagues’ (2012) study, 46 percent of criminal justice agents reported that their local government had no official policies on immigration policing, 4 percent had sanctuary policies for non-criminal cases (i.e. they are not considered the offender), and 15 percent had “don’t ask, don’t tell” policies. Unfortunately, there is no way to compare the list of respondents from Provine et al. (2016) and Davis, Erez, and Avitable (2001) to the most current list of sanctuary cities because the counties studied were not listed by name.

Davis et al. (2001) reported that of the 69 criminal justice agents (prosecutors, police officers, etc.) in their survey based study, 53 percent claimed to have “special programs for immigrants.” For example, 75 percent provided multilingual assistance or translators, approximately 25 percent engaged in outreach to immigrant communities, and 73 percent printed brochures in languages other than English. Eighteen percent of criminal justice agents in the survey felt that underreporting was not a problem, quoting one police department as saying, “The less crime, the better. Not reporting causes problems for the victim, not the criminal justice system.” (Davis et al., 2001). Such ambivalence toward the unique circumstances of



undocumented victims damages trust between immigrants and law enforcement and, the availability of programs further declined post September 11, 2001, when hostility toward immigrants spiked (Welch, 2012).

Immigration enforcement policy reforms increased the stereotyping of Latinos in search of undocumented immigrants. The Maricopa County Police Department in Arizona, for example, was investigated by the Department of Justice (DoJ) for racially profiling and discriminating against Latinos. The DoJ confirmed unconstitutional policing practices including focusing on Latino drivers for traffic stops, raids on places that employed masses of immigrants, and unlawful stops, detainment, and arrests of Latinos (Provine et al., 2016). These practices built a “wall of distrust” between officers and Latino residents. Later reforms slashed operating budgets while increasing local participation, but did not provide a solution to the discriminatory practices that fueled stereotyping against Latinos. Exacerbating the problem was the decrease of local law enforcement “training” while participation in enforcement programs became mandatory across the United States.

#### *Immigration Policy: Obama Era: 2008-2016*

By the end of Obama’s presidency in 2016, he was nicknamed “Deporter-In-Chief” by immigrants and immigrant advocates (MPI, 2017). To understand how he earned this nickname, the following summarizes his immigration reforms including both attempted and passed legislation.

In 2011, the Obama Administration issued an Immigration blueprint (White House, 2011) outlining proposed immigration reforms focused on securing the boarder, enforcing laws, and updating the immigration system to “reflect the values of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.” The blueprint begins by praising immigrants’ contribution to the economic, intellectual, and military stability of the

United States. In *Dedicating Unprecedented Resources to Securing the Border*, the Obama Administration claimed to have doubled the number of border patrol agents from 10,000 in 2004 to over 20,700 in 2010. That number peaked at 21,444 in 2011 before declining gradually to 19,828 upon leaving office (CPB, 2017). The Administration claimed the construction of a 652-mile-long fence across the California and Texas border with Mexico. In addition, they claimed infrastructure and technological security improvements to the American-Canadian and American-Mexican border with partnerships with each respective government. They claimed a reduction of apprehensions from 724,000 in FY 08 to 463,000 in FY 10 was an indication that improved security measures resulted in fewer illegal-crossing attempts (White House, 2011).

During his first term, President Obama set priorities across the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and the Department of Justice (DOJ). While simultaneously setting enforcement priorities on “the removal of individuals who pose a danger to national security or public safety, with a particular focus on convicted criminals... recent border violators, those who have been previously deported and fugitives” (p.7), they also outlined increased enforcement efforts targeting worksite and employer compliance through “audits of employment verification records, civil fines and debarment, and promoting compliance tools.” (p.8). Scholars have criticized these actions as a) targeting low level “criminals” (Golash-Boza, 2015), who may have committed the crime in question decades earlier (Brotherton & Barrios, 2011), or those who were unaware of their “fugitive status.” Golash-Boza (2015) breaks down FY 2012 deportations with the top criminal offenses as immigration infractions (24 percent), traffic violations (23 percent) and drug charges (21 percent). Additionally, the enforcement of “worksites” have been criticized as being ill

enforced, pro-employer, and ineffective for preventing immigrant exploitation (Golash-Boza, 2015).

Obama's blueprint states "we cannot solve the problem with our broken immigration system through enforcement alone." (p.2). Indeed, the Administration outlined steps toward improving immigrant opportunities for naturalization and citizenship including military families and victims of crime (p. 8-9). U and T Visas were created by the Victims of Trafficking and Violence Prevention Act (2000) for victims of certain crime (U-Visa) and victims of trafficking (T-Visa). Scholars and activists have criticized the requirement of cooperating with law enforcement as placing victims in immediate danger at the hands of abusers (Villalón, 2010), forcing immigrants to be involved in the prosecution of traffickers, which may endanger relatives in their country of origin (Chapkis, 2003) and dividing victims into purely innocent versus guilty victims (Chapkis, 2003). Immigrants may still be deported, even when they were forced or mislead into engaging in illicit activity, had criminal charges dropped, or even when they cooperate in the successful prosecution of drug operations (Brotherton & Barrios, 2011). The Obama Administration, however, claims that due to the active DHS promotion of awareness regarding this option, FY 10 was the first time in history that the 10,000 statutory cap on U Visa recipients was reached (p.8).

The Obama Administration made explicit distinctions between legal and illegal immigrants. The blueprint identified means to reduce barriers for "high-skilled" immigrants including those who are "self-funded entrepreneurs" (p. 9) while stating that illegal immigrants living in the United States must "take responsibility" (p.3):

People who are in America illegally have a -responsibility- to pay their back taxes and admit responsibility for breaking the law, pay a penalty, learn English, pass criminal background checks, and get right with the law-or face removal- before they can get in line and eventually earn their citizenship. ~Obama, April 23, 2010 (WhiteHouse, 2011).

This statement, and others like it, has had a twofold effect. First, it reinforces the stereotyping of undocumented immigrants as evading taxes, refusing to learn English (i.e. assimilate), and unwilling to earn their place in American society. Second, its accusatory and ultimatum-style tone reinforces enforcement priorities and likely reinforced the fear experienced in immigrant communities. These areas are further discussed in the later chapters on stereotyping and vulnerability.

The Obama Immigration Era represents a mixed legacy with messages and policies that are both immigrant supportive and enforcement focused. Among Obama's most controversial and immigrant-friendly legislation were the DREAM/DACA Acts.

The Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors (DREAM) Act of 2010 was proposed to provide "conditional, non-immigrant" status to undocumented immigrants who were brought to the United States as children under the age of 16, who lived in the U.S. for at least 5 years prior to the enactment of the legislation but were under the age of 30, had no criminal record or other deportable offense, graduated from a U.S. high school, earned a G.E.D. or enrolled in higher education. Undocumented students, military veterans, and current workers, with no criminal record, could apply for social security numbers and receive reprieve from deportation so long as they maintained the established guidelines. The DREAM Act was passed by the House of Representatives and the Senate but could not pass both houses of Congress. As a short-term solution to the political hindrances, Obama issued the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) executive order. DACA provided many of the same benefits and required the same qualifications as the DREAM Act, but bypassed Congressional approval, which sped up implementation, but also made it susceptible to repeal by the next administration. As such, along

with many Obama-era immigration policies, it was among the first targeted by the Trump administration.

*Immigration Policy: Trump Era: 2016- present*

The Trump Era is viewed by many as a direct response to having the nation's first black president. The racism the Obama family endured was well documented in media and was primarily from conservative white citizens, media, and politicians (Samuel, 2016). Fast forward to the 2016 President elections, Trump's platform pandered to white resentment of perceived loss of political influence and fear of minorities. While he spoke disparagingly of blacks and Latinos, his primary focus and campaign promises focused largely on one group, "Mexican immigrants" who he described as rapists and criminals in an infamous rally speech.

"The U.S. has become a dumping ground for everybody else's problems... When Mexico sends its people, they're not sending their best... they're sending people who have lots of problems and they're bringing those problems with us [author's note, he meant 'them']. They're bringing drugs, they're bringing crime, they're rapists, and some, I assume, are good people, but I speak to border guards and they tell us what we're getting. And it only makes common sense... It's coming from more than Mexico. It's coming from all over South and Latin America and it's coming probably, probably from the Middle East."

His campaign promises centered on building a wall along the Mexican-American border (despite the 652-mile fence constructed by the Obama Administration) and promised that Mexico would fund the wall, even as the Mexican president publicly dismissed funding it. His pledge was later revised to suggest that Mexico would reimburse the U.S. through tariffs. As of October 2017, no legislation to fulfill this promise has been offered.

Trump's first nine months in office were lined with executive actions and legislation put forth by the Republican led House of Representatives that fueled his anti-immigration stance.

Among these actions were Executive Order 13767: Border Security and Immigration Enforcement Improvements, Executive Order 13768: Enhancing Public Safety on the Interior of the United States, Executive Order 13773: Enforcing Federal Law with Respect to Transnational

Criminal Organizations and Preventing International Trafficking, HR 3003: No Sanctuary for Criminals Act, HR 3697: Criminal Alien Gang Member Removal Act, among others. Executive Order 13767, in brief, sought to enforce existing immigration laws and expand enforcement efforts along the border. Executive Order 13768, in part, sought to halt federal subsidies and grants to “sanctuary jurisdictions” that refused to aid federal officers in the apprehension of suspected undocumented immigrants. This section (9A) of the executive order was challenged by case #17-cv-00574-WHO (“County of Santa Clara v. Trump” 2017). U.S. District Court Judge William Orrick granted a temporary injunction after government lawyers acknowledged the executive order was “toothless,” and “merely an exercise of the President’s ‘bully pulpit’ to highlight a changed approach to immigration enforcement.” In response to the Courts’ April 2017 ruling, HR 3003 was put forth in June 2017 by ten members of the House of Representatives seeking to limit funding to Sanctuary cities. As of October 2017, it has been pending a Senate vote.

The criminalization of undocumented Latino immigrants has been a central focus of the Trump administration rhetoric and political agenda. First, in April 2017, the Trump administration announced the Victims of Immigration Crime Engagement Office (VOICE) within the Department of Homeland Security. This office explicitly targets victims of crime committed by undocumented immigrants arguing, “They are casualties of crimes that should never have taken place—because the people who victimized them often times should not have been in the country in the first place.” Interestingly, it does not appear to provide distinct support, but rather facilitates access to local victim services that victims would have had access to regardless of a perpetrator’s immigration status. It is also noteworthy that undocumented victims of crime (particularly victims of citizen abusers) are not provided reprieve by this office

and, according to media reports, victims were arrested by ICE following court appearances (Gonzales, 2017; Lockhart, 2017). Cases of domestic violence are already underreported, but are even less likely to be reported when victims fear that they, or their partner, will be deported (Villalón, 2010).

Next, HR 3697: Criminal Alien Gang Member Removal Act strategically targets the Mara Salvatrucha 13 (MS-13) gang. While MS-13 is notorious for its ruthless violence, its members are also comprised predominantly of Central American ethnicities, primarily of El Salvador. This ties into the narrative Trump offered linking Latinos, immigration, and criminal activity. HR 3697 has been heavily criticized by Civil Right organizations as unnecessary, violating human rights, and disproportionately targeting younger immigrants who may be fleeing gang violence in their countries of origin (Grupta, 2017). The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) wrote a letter to the House of Representatives urging that they vote “no” on the bill, arguing that “it will promote widespread racial profiling, violate First Amendment protections, expand mandatory detention of immigrants, raise serious constitutional questions on judicial review of government designations of certain groups, and bar humanitarian relief for individuals in violation of international treaties.” (ACLU, 2017, pp.1). HR 3697 passed the House of Representatives in September 2017 and, as of October 2017, is pending a Senate vote.

The ACLU’s concern of “widespread racial profiling” was not the only time this concern was raised during the Trump administration. In 2013, the ACLU filed a class action lawsuit against former Arizona sheriff Joe Arpaio who cracked down on illegal immigration by targeting Latinos for traffic stops, work raids, and detaining suspected “illegal” aliens. He lost the 2013 civil lawsuit and in 2015 was brought up on criminal contempt charges claiming Arpaio explicitly refused to abide by a 2011 Federal Court Order to cease detaining individuals who had

not broken any laws and whose suspected immigration status was based only on racially profiling of Latinos. He was convicted on July 31, 2017 in a U.S. District Court and, within a month, on August 25, 2017, the Trump administration pardoned Arpaio before he was scheduled for sentencing in October 2017. Arpaio filed to have his conviction removed from his record in light of the timing of Presidential Pardon. Since the offense was not given a sentence and the circumstances lack precedence, the courts considered his request. But ultimately ruled that a presidential pardon does not vacate criminal convictions. This action by the Trump administration not only condones the racial profiling of Latinos by vacating the punishment for a criminal conviction but also sent a very pronounced message to not just immigrants, but the Latino community as a whole, “those who violate the rights of Latinos in search of undocumented immigrants will be shielded from legal punishment.”

Trump’s stance against undocumented immigrants also applies to amnesty programs set in place by Obama. As previously discussed, the DACA program was issued via executive order to protect children who were under the age of 16 when brought to the United States by their parents from deportation. In September 2017, the Trump Administration announced they were not renewing the DACA program but provided the Republican-majority congress approximately six months to legislate a permanent solution before current recipients begin losing their status in March 2018. The ACLU, advocates of immigrant rights, among others called the move “cruel” and current recipients expressed fear that they are now easier to deport because the DHS has their information as part of their application.

### *Summary*

As a consequence of immigrant poly-vulnerability, policies prioritizing immigration status over victimization, anti-Latino sentiments among public and political figures, the



militarization of immigration enforcement and a lack of in-depth data on immigrant victims, the targeting of undocumented immigrants represents a critical gap in the criminological literature. As previously stated, many of the same factors that engender their victimization (e.g., illegal status, poor language skills) make it highly unlikely that they will report victimization or seek aid from agents of formal social control. This contributes to the Dark Figure of Crime (see Biderman & Reiss, 1967; Coleman & Moynihan, 1996), represented as offending and victimization not found in official records. Undocumented immigrants likely represent a significant portion of the Dark Figure of Crime due to: a) the lack of data on victims' immigration status in official records such as the Uniform Crime Report (UCR) and the National Crime Victimization Survey (NCVS) (Bucher et al., 2010; Martinez & Valenzuela Jr, 2006; McDonald & Erez, 2007), b) the fact that immigrants live "in the shadows" means that there is minimal official sources of data on victimization and a general lack of access to this population through conventional data collection mechanisms including surveys and interviews, and c) an overall lack of concern for immigrants as victims due to the public and political perception of them as perpetrators of crime (McDonald & Erez, 2007; Wang, 2012).

Immigrant victimization is often gendered and concentrated among specific crimes. For example, there is a plethora of literature around domestic violence/ abuse (Erez, 2000; Erez et al., 2009; Loke, 1996; Menjivar & Salcido, 2002; Narayan, 1995; Villalón, 2010) and sex trafficking (Chapkis, 2003) for women and several studies on wage theft for men (Barranco & Shihadeh, 2015; Bucher et al., 2010; Fussell, 2011; Theodore et al., 2006). However, very few studies examine wage theft against female immigrants and domestic violence among immigrant men. In addition, the terminology used to study this population varies with labels such as undocumented immigrants, migrant workers, day laborers, immigrants (without residency

distinction), etc. Such labels are used interchangeably and equivalently, making a collective understanding of the current state of literature difficult. For the purposes of the current proposal, the term “undocumented immigrant” is used to refer to immigrants who lack formal, U.S. documentation either because they never received formal documentation or because their formal documentation was revoked or expired. This allows us to define our population of interest while not limiting the targeting and victimization of this group solely to the “migrant worker” occupation.

While the immigration debate in the United States dates back over a century, the overview provided here is meant to give a synopsis of major policy milestones over the last 30 years. Some will criticize this work as advancing a political agenda and, unfortunately, there is no way to fully appease such criticism given the highly politicized nature of immigration. This work seeks to highlight the vulnerability of undocumented Latino immigrants from the viewpoints of perpetrators who explicitly target the victims. In doing so, certain systemic factors that perpetuate immigrant victimization are highlighted and discussed.

### *The Current Study*

This study seeks to address the gap in literature regarding the victimization of undocumented immigrants through the perceptions of the street offenders who target them. Specifically, this thesis attempts to answer the following questions: a) do active street offenders explicitly target undocumented immigrants and b) are the vulnerabilities identified in literature through interviews with undocumented victims corroborated as vulnerabilities sought out by predatory street offenders? My first expected outcome is that street offenders will corroborate specific vulnerabilities such as immigration status, engaging in a cash economy, and lack of access to law enforcement as reasons for targeting immigrants. My second expected outcome is

that street offenders who target undocumented immigrants will target “migrant worker” locations due to their visibility.

This proposal attempts to consolidate the literature on Latino immigrant victimization and exploitation through a Routine Activities Theory (RAT) framework. This is critical for multiple reasons. First, much of the immigrant victimization literature already identifies what I term the poly-vulnerability of undocumented immigrants in relation to a lack of access to police (i.e. formal) guardianship. RAT, as discussed in depth in Chapter III, suggests that vulnerable individuals without guardianship are at a greater risk for victim selection by a motivated offender. However, while the original RAT framework assumes a motivated offender, this thesis incorporates research focused on offender motivation, nuances the attributes that increase the motivation to target this specific population, and provides a distinct link between the three framework elements. While RAT has been used as an explanatory mechanism for the victimization experience of undocumented immigrants (Barranco & Shihadeh, 2015; Bucher et al., 2010), the relationship has yet to be explored in depth. In addition, while a handful of studies have measured immigrant robbery victimization by interviewing “migrant workers” or “day laborers” (Barranco & Shihadeh, 2015; Bucher et al., 2010; Cepeda et al., 2012; Fussell, 2011; Negi et al., 2013; Theodore et al., 2006), none have studied immigrant targeting and victimization from the perspective of street offenders who target this population, an endeavor that was deemed unlikely (Fussell, 2011). Specifically, Fussell (2011) stated,

The unauthorized Latino migrants provide their interpretation of the social processes by which they are exposed to labor abuses and criminal victimization, but we do not hear anything from the perpetrators of these crimes (are we aren't likely to). (p. 611)

This thesis contributes to the existing literature by attempting to corroborate (or negate) hypotheses proposed by scholars who have interviewed undocumented victims, expanding the

criminological understanding of immigration victimization through a detailed analysis of this phenomenon within a RAT framework, and adding to the knowledge base of decision making processes of active street offenders.

The research proposed herein focuses on the experiences of Latina/o<sup>1</sup> undocumented immigrants for multiple reasons. First, Latinos are the fastest growing minority group in the United States, but the research on Latino victimization has suggested methodological flaws that question the validity of the current data (Brown, 2009). Among these concerns are the underrepresentation of Latino immigrants in official crime and victimization data (Brown, 2009; McDonald & Erez, 2007). Second, Latinos represent approximately 70 percent of the undocumented immigrant population living in the United States, but over 95 percent of those deported (Golash-Boza, 2015). In recent years, immigration concerns have increasingly focused on “Mexican” immigrants resulting in mainstream stereotypes merging economic threat with the Latino ethnicity (Burns & Gimpel, 2000). Recent legislation has strengthened anti-Latino sentiments and further marginalized victims in attempts to address threat concerns. The overrepresentation in deportation statistics and mainstream association between Latinos, undocumented status (Pickett, 2016), and economic threat (Burns & Gimpel, 2000) may highlight their suitability as a crime target, perpetuating fear among Latino immigrants to report victimization, and negatively affect law enforcement relations with Latino communities (Provine et al., 2016).

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<sup>1</sup> Hereafter referred to as Latinos for simplicity. Although the term Latinx is increasingly used to be gender neutral, the literature referenced utilizes male participants and the offenders interviewed here refer to male targets. Therefore, it seems appropriate to use the male pronoun until research is conducted that allows gender comparisons.

## Chapter II: Literature Review

### *Stereotyping/ Stigma*

A key challenge for undocumented immigrants is the manner in which others view them as a product of their legal status. Stereotypes lead to assumptions regarding their criminal threat (Wang, 2012), their morality (Chavez, 2013), their perceived desire to take jobs from legal residents (Kubrin, 2013) as well as their desire to not work and live off of social welfare programs (Kubrin, 2013). Stereotypes regarding Latino/as as a racial group include the notion that Latina women have many children in order to take advantage of welfare and use children as “anchor babies” or as a means to increase the Hispanic population in order to invade land once owned by Mexico (Chavez, 2013). In combination, the beliefs held about undocumented Latinos contributes to their victimization on individual and systemic levels. The roots of such erroneous and often damaging beliefs have been considered by both sociologists and psychologists, from social and individual perspectives.

In *Stigma*, Goffman (1963) describes the multifaceted experience of stigmatized individuals as a consequence of possessing characteristics deemed undesirable to larger society. He identifies three main forms of stigma: bodily/ physical deformities, blemishes of individual character, and “tribal stigma.” These tribal stigmas act as a foundation for ingroup/ outgroup identification, which shifts depending on which characteristic is triggered. For example, “Latino” triggers social identification based on individual ethnicity. If the identification category is changed to immigrant, it is no longer associated with ethnicity (theoretically) but rather with the citizenship status within a country. Finally, “undocumented immigrants” identifies a subgroup of the immigrant population. Undocumented Latino immigrants suffer from the simultaneous “tribal stigmas” of Latino heritage, foreigner (i.e., “outsider”) status, and the absence formal

documentation, which is critical to the notion of a “legitimate” identity, resulting in a perceived “illegal” status.

Stereotyping plays a crucial role in the outgroup perceptions of stigmatized groups. The stereotypes associated with each group may vary depending on individual prejudices. For example, “immigrant” may elicit images of successful entrepreneurs who have had positive impacts on societal growth. Latino may not solicit positive or negative sentiments while “undocumented immigrant” may elicit negative sentiments. When combined, group stereotypes may have a multiplicative effect such that the stereotypes of one group influence the formerly neutral perceptions of another. For example, individuals formerly neutral on Latinos may have increasingly negative sentiments toward undocumented Latino immigrants in comparison to undocumented European immigrants. Of particular relevance to this study, undocumented immigration status has become synonymous with the Latino ethnicity in the United States starting from the 1990s (Burns & Gimpel, 2000; Pickett, 2016) in media and political discourse. These perceived group stigmas elicit negative sentiments particularly when compounded by perceived blemishes of individual character (i.e. stereotypes derived from individual cases or experiences are generalized to the group). These blemishes of character (Goffman, 1963) most often perpetuated by social truisms and media sensationalism stigmatize undocumented Latino immigrants as prone to criminality (Kubrin, 2013), exploiting public assistance programs and social resources (Sullivan & Rehm, 2005), and stealing employment opportunities from citizens (Sullivan & Rehm, 2005).

Fiske and Taylor (2013) distinguish between stereotypes as the “cognitive side of intergroup bias” and prejudice as its “affective side.” They distinguish between subtle and blatant biases. According to Social Identification Theory, biases may occur between individuals or

groups, but may also affect interactions with both. They argue that the mere categorization of people creates biases and, when faced with limited resources, people often favor their ingroup over outgroups (Fiske & Taylor, 2013). “Ingroup favoritism occurs automatically and increases with strong ingroup identification, for those whose identity is under threat... and insecure high-status groups” (p. 285). This is prominent to the immigration debate whereby most opponents do not express overt biases but rather use immigration as an ethnicity coded term for expressing anti-Latino sentiments (Pickett, 2016), supporting legislation that disadvantage minority groups (Fiske & Taylor, 2013; Wang, 2012) and frames sentiments as a defense mechanism against the threat posed by the stigmatized group.

The infrahuman (less-than-human) perspective reduces individual’s sympathy toward other groups by denying individuals or groups typical human characteristics. Goffman describes an unstigmatized person’s perspective of stigmatized individual’s as “not quite human,” feeding into a “standard of judgment” that is not perceived to apply to the unstigmatized group.

Stigmatized individuals may perceive, usually correctly, that "whatever others profess, they do not 'accept' him and are not ready to make contact with him on 'equal grounds.'" (Goffman, 1986, pp. 7). This is prominent in reports of the immigration experience. For example, many of the same native individuals who denounce gang or drug violence do not support legislation that would aid relief efforts for refugees fleeing the same violence. Individuals who argue that immigrants pose an economic threat may be unwilling to work the occupations and receive the wages immigrants work and receive. Fiske and Taylor (2013) suggests that dehumanization is often applied to outgroups based on their “ethnicity, immigration status, or disability” (p. 291) and “underlies some of humanity’s worst mass crimes...” (p.291). Goffman (1963) states that the perception of stigmatized others as subhuman coupled with the inability to be accepted on equal

grounds result in a “proneness to victimization” during mixed encounters between non-stigmatized (ingroup) and stigmatized (outgroup) individuals.

Dehumanization through stereotyping is a cognitive strategy used by individuals or groups in power to justify the victimization of others through individual or systemic violence. Dehumanization as a result of stereotypes emphasizing threat may serve to neutralize an individual’s guilt for exploiting or targeting an undocumented immigrant. Stereotyping and dehumanization, however, may generalize to groups not directly related to the original stigmatized group. For example, widespread acceptance of stigmatization has led to institutional racism against Latino undocumented immigrants at the legislative level. Chung, Bemak, Ortiz, and Sandoval- Perez (2008) defined institutional racism as “the systemic, organizational, and governmental policies and practices that discriminate against and invalidate people in racial/ ethnic/ cultural groups through unequal allocation of resources and lack of opportunity and access” (p.313). By shaping policy that restricts access to basic “rights” such as medical services (Berk & Schur, 2001), formal social control (Kanstroom & Lykes, 2015), and protections during legal proceedings (Kanstroom & Lykes, 2015), immigrant targeted legislation affected both the criminal justice and healthcare systems, resulting in fear to report victimizations (Bucher et al., 2010), access services (Berk & Schur, 2001; Nandi et al., 2008) and a reduction of resources available to seek healthcare, including mental health (Sullivan & Rehm, 2005), specifically among Latino immigrants. Stereotyping therefore increases discrimination and vulnerability while decreasing access to resources, leaving the needs of undocumented immigrants unaddressed. These structural barriers open up the possibility for victimization from formal entities such as employers, police, and even legal agencies offering “aid”, as well as informal



entities, such as offenders, while simultaneously decreasing the legal and medical resources available for victims.

Obama's Blueprint for Immigration (Whitehouse, 2011) subtly sought to rectify commonly held stereotypes regarding immigrants' impact on the economy. Such stereotypes include the notion that they steal jobs from American citizens, they pull more resources than they provide, and that immigration reforms would incur more expenses than benefits. In the Economic Imperative for Immigration Reforms section of the report, it claims that "immigrants started 25 percent of the highest growth companies between 1990 and 2005, and these companies directly employ an estimated 220,000 people inside the United States." (p.11). In addition, immigrants are nearly 30 percent more likely to start a business than non-immigrants (i.e. American citizens) and they generate \$67 billion of the \$577 billion in U.S. business income. The blueprint cites the non-partisan Congressional Budget which reported that the DREAM Act and other paths to legalization for unauthorized immigrants would generate more surplus from federal revenues than cost (\$48 billion in revenue- \$23 billion in expenses = \$25 billion in surplus). Immigration reform would also result in more new revenue than would be spent on social programs. Regarding undocumented immigrants specifically, the blueprint cites IRS records estimating \$50 billion in federal taxes paid by undocumented immigrants from 1996-2003 in Social Security, property, and sales taxes. Acknowledging that "40 percent of undocumented immigrants work off the books" (p.13), they push for legalization routes to ensure both workers and employers pay required taxes.

#### *Minority Threat Framework*

The pervasive stereotyping and prejudice against undocumented immigrants tie into the each of the three elements of minority threat: criminal, economic and political. The minority

threat framework (also referred to as group threat, racial threat, ethnic threat, power threat, etc.; hereafter shortened to MTF for consistency) suggests that prejudice and intergroup hostility stem from perceived threats to the economic standing, political influence, and public safety of the dominant group members by subordinate groups (Berg, 2009; Blalock, 1967; King & Wheelock, 2007; Wang, 2012).

Scholars have suggested that stereotypes have a more powerful influence on public opinion than empirical evidence (Ousey & Kubrin, 2009; Stewart, Martinez Jr, Baumer, & Gertz, 2015). Stereotyping increases negative personal sentiments toward individuals or groups. The MTF literature links the increase in minority population size to increases in perceived threat (Blalock, 1967; Wang, 2012). The increase in Latino immigrants and native-born immigrants may instigate the perception of “outsider” or “invader” threat due to cultural background. Criminal threat may stem from an immigrant’s “illegal” status, which has become synonymous with criminality for many. Economic threat may be triggered by the rhetoric that immigrants are unfairly taking advantage of opportunities that would normally be occupied by citizens. Political threat may be perceived by any legislation that seeks to benefit or protect this population.

The MTF literature has focused on how whites as the “dominant” group (Berg, 2009; King & Wheelock, 2007) view and respond to other racial groups as the “minority” with a primary focus on “black threat” and, to a lesser degree, Latinos (Stewart et al., 2015). The Latino population increase and the shift in settlement locations may be seen as “threatening” to the established local population (Brettell & Nibbs, 2011). Beyond the core elements of minority threat, scholars have also argued that Latinos are perceived to also pose a cultural (Brettell & Nibbs, 2011) and linguistic (Chavez, 2013) threat to established middle class, English speaking neighborhoods.

### *Economic Threat*

Regarding economic threat, dominant groups seek to preserve their advantaged social position (Blumer, 1958; King & Wheelock, 2007) and view minority groups as oversaturating limited resources such as schools, housing, or jobs, particularly in areas experiencing poor economic conditions (King & Wheelock, 2007). The debate on immigration has become synonymous with economy in mainstream discussions, with Latinos as the focus of stereotypes regarding immigrant “theft” of jobs. Shihadeh and Barranco (2010c) note, “a tough recession has amplified anti-immigration sentiments into a full-blown rage, focused squarely on Latino immigrants” (p. 348). Increased perceived threat also increases “punitive sentiments” towards Latinos more broadly (Pickett, 2016; Stewart et al., 2015). Pickett (2016) found that perceived Latino economic threat was significantly and positively associated with support for expanded police powers, but only among white respondents.

The labor market competition perspective suggests that workforce competition influences attitudes toward immigration (Berg, 2009). In particular, economic stagnation or recession exacerbates negative attitudes toward undocumented immigrants, especially among lower socio-economic groups who fear losing limited employment opportunities. Burns and Gimpel (2000), using the 1992-1996 American National Election Studies data, found that respondents’ personal economic outlooks were not related to attitudes toward Latinos<sup>2</sup> in 1992. Even those with a negative outlook on their own economic standing did not view Latinos more harshly. This however shifted drastically in 1996 when AEDPA and IIRIRA brought Latino immigrants sharply into political focus.

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<sup>2</sup> Termed Hispanics in the study.

Employers' perceived preference for Latinos may be the result of the intersecting dynamics between economy, citizenship status, and race. Companies seeking to maximize profits often aim to cut labor costs (Theodore et al., 2006) and may rely on a nonunionized "migrant" labor force to achieve this goal. In addition to paying low wages, utilizing migrant labor allows employers to save on insurance, benefits, and other costly labor expenses (Theodore et al., 2006). If the migrant worker hired is Latino, they are stereotyped as undocumented (Fussell, 2011) and previous studies found that three-quarters of migrant workers in fact lack formal documentation (Theodore et al., 2006), perhaps because migrant labor is seen as a stepping stone to employment for new arrivals.

Employers further cut labor costs by engaging in wage theft, defined as underpayment or non-payment for labor performed (Theodore et al., 2006). Thirty-five (Fussell, 2011) to 60 (Theodore et al., 2006) percent of surveyed undocumented workers have reportedly experienced such victimization. Employers who engage in such practices are rarely penalized due to poor oversight and enforcement of labor laws and immigration laws that prioritize the deportation of undocumented immigrants over the compliance of employers (Lee, 2009).

### *Criminal Threat*

Although multiple researchers argue that undocumented immigrants do not pose a threat to public safety (Hickman & Suttorb, 2008), they nevertheless have been perceived by society as the most crime prone segment of the immigrant population (Buchanam, 2006; Sampson, 2008). This "crime prone" perception may stem from their "illegal" status. Chavez (2013) argues that Mexican immigrants are stigmatized with the "illegal alien" label, branding them criminals and therefore "illegitimate members of society undeserving of social benefits, including citizenship." (p.7). The percentage of citizen unemployment has been shown to influence the perception of

undocumented immigrants as a criminal threat (Wang, 2012). Literature suggests that attempts to control subordinate groups result in support of right wing political candidates (Fiske & Taylor, 2013) who seek to restrict immigration by portraying immigrants as undeserving criminals (King & Wheelock, 2007; Wang, 2012) and utilizing social control measures such as the criminal justice (King & Wheelock, 2007) and immigration systems (Golash-Boza, 2015). Consistent with the MTF (Blalock, 1967), Wang (2012) found that perceived criminal threat increased with the *perceived* size of the undocumented immigrant population.

“Crimmigration” is a term commonly used among legal scholars to refer to the merging of immigration enforcement and criminal justice. Among the most impactful crimmigration policies has been the delegation of federal immigration responsibilities and authority to local law enforcement. Scholars have noted the harm in community- police trust (Goldsmith, 2005) and the increase in racial profiling of Latinos, native and foreign born (Menjívar & Bejarano, 2004). These policies clash with those of other legal systems, resulting in a compounded effect that: a) punish non-citizens more harshly for minor offenses (Golash-Boza, 2015; Kanstroom & Lykes, 2015), b) remove legal protections that are available to criminal citizens (Kanstroom & Lykes, 2015), c) do not protect immigrant victims from the legal ramifications of their undocumented status (Brotherton & Barrios, 2011), d) inflict irreparable generational damage (Kanstroom & Lykes, 2015), and e) marginalizes citizens of Latino heritage who are targeted by biased immigration enforcement strategies (Pickett, 2016; Provine et al., 2016). Indeed, Pickett (2016) found that perceived Latino threat was more strongly correlated with support for police use of racial profiling among white respondents than their own perceived risk of victimization.

### *Political Threat*

As minority population increases, the dominant group fears a loss in political influence (King & Wheelock, 2007). Latinos have been historically aligned with the Democratic party (Montoya, Hardy-Fanta, & Garcia, 2000). The Latino population increased from approximately 14.8 million in 1980 to 56.5 million in 2015 (Pew Hispanic, 2015), with 28.3 percent foreign born in 1980 versus 34.4 percent foreign-born in 2015. Since immigration has become associated with Latinos (Burns & Gimpel, 2000), Conservatives fear that too many Latinos will push legislation that benefit “illegals.”

The Obama and Trump administrations highlighted these sentiments. Despite historic levels of deportation of predominantly Latino men (Golash-Boza, 2015) during his administration, Obama was heavily criticized as being “soft” on immigration and many of his initiatives aimed at aiding qualified undocumented immigrants obtain citizenship failed to become legislation. The Trump administration called the Obama-Era immigration policies a “failure” and sought to expand the enforcement power of enacted policies while simultaneously decreasing protections afforded to undocumented immigrants.

### *MTF: Latino Threat Narrative*

Chavez (2013) argues that the Latino Threat Narrative is part of “a grand tradition of alarmist discourse about immigrants and their perceived negative impacts on society” (p.4).

Mexico, Mexican immigrants, and the U.S. born of Mexican origin are the core foci of the Latino Threat Narrative, but the threat is often generalized to all Latin American immigrants and at times, to all Latinos in the United States (p.25).

The Latino Threat Narrative posits that Latinos are not like previous immigrant groups who ultimately became part of the nation... Latinos are unwilling or incapable of integrating, of becoming part of the national community. Rather they are part of an invading force from south of the border that is bent on reconquering land that was formerly theirs (the U.S. Southwest) and destroying the American way of life (p.3).

The MTF, while rarely discussed in this context, has a compounding effect on Latinos because it places them in opposition to two groups: African Americans and Caucasians. The perceived correlation between Latinos and “illegal” status adds an additional layer to the power dynamic between groups. This is important because “perpetrators of abuse usually possess power over the victim, whether they are part of a dominant group, stronger or older, or in positions of authority” (Torres et. al., 2011). In the case for Latinos, broad stereotyping and perceived threat may influence intergroup hostility and increase their vulnerability to victimization.

Similar to the Race-plus-Sex Theory which argues that the combination of “stereotyped characterizations” of an individual’s race plus their sex resulted in discrimination (Weatherspoon, 1996), it is anticipated that undocumented Latino-immigrants suffer from bias resulting from prejudice confounded by race and immigration status. As Berg (2009) argues,

[o]ften, dominant groups and minority groups share the same citizenship status. This is not the case for undocumented immigrants. Members of the dominant group may not afford undocumented immigrants the same degree of... tolerance as they do toward other minority groups (p. 40).

For example, not all Latinos may experience discrimination and the stereotypes of European immigrants may be vastly different than Latino immigrants (Berg, 2009). Also, undocumented Latino immigrants may have different experiences than documented Latino immigrants. The combined instigating factors of race and immigration status thereby increase the vulnerability of undocumented Latino immigrants.

Scholars suggest that African Americans compete, often unsuccessfully, for scarce, low skill employment (Barranco & Shihadeh, 2015; Shihadeh & Barranco, 2010a). Similarly, Caucasians at one extreme, also compete for low skill employment in rural areas (Shihadeh & Barranco, 2010b) and, at the other, hold relative social and political influence (Berg, 2009) and may fear losing economic advantage (King & Wheelock, 2007). A layered MTF that accounts

for the interdependent of race, gender, class and citizenship status would allow for a nuanced understanding of the multidimensional dynamics between groups.

#### *MTF: Latinos and Whites*

A layered MTF perspective would be particularly useful to dissect the interaction between Latinos and Whites because it allows for a differentiation of perceptions based on social and documentation status. As previously discussed, literature has found that whites associate immigration with Latinos (Berg, 2009) and undocumented status with criminality (Brettell & Nibbs, 2011). Pickett (2016) notes “immigration is an ethnicity -coded issue that allows for the veiled expression of anti-Latino sentiments.” (p. 103). As the Latino population increases (or is perceived to increase), whites reportedly express stronger anti-immigrant sentiments (Berg, 2009) however the underlying reasons for negative sentiments vary by social status.

Fiske and Taylor (2013) suggest “Whites who score high on modern racism hold various political opinions that... disadvantage minorities.” (p.298). Some white Americans argue that it is less about race and more about a threat to cultural identity represented by middle class symbols of American nationality. These symbols are “holding middle class values and tastes, being law abiding, and being patriotic.” The underlying symbolism reflected divisions along racial lines such as residents perceiving the waiving of the Mexican flag as unpatriotic to America, the association with undocumented status but not certain criminal violations as not law abiding, and cultural differences in home and neighborhood symbols as driving down home market values and threatening whites cultural identity (Brettell & Nibbs, 2011).

Berg (2009) found that each percentage increase in unemployment in local regions increases white likelihood to support tougher government action by five percent in 1996 but not in 2004, likely corresponding with the immigrant targeting 1996 AEDPA and IIRIRA laws



discussed earlier. In addition, Shihadeh and Barranco (2010b) argue that Latino immigration increases white violence in rural areas by shifting low skill jobs from whites to Latinos. While the authors note an increase in white violence, they do not specify to whom the violence was directed.

#### *MTF: Latinos and Blacks*

The MTF predicts that African Americans would feel threatened by increases in undocumented Latino immigrants due to increased competition for low skill jobs, housing, schools, and other resources (Barranco & Shihadeh, 2015). Indeed, Shihadeh and Barranco (2010a) argue that immigration had a significant effect on black violence indirectly by increasing black unemployment in certain occupations. A defense response might be to reaffirm a power hierarchy by robbing immigrants, however the literature provides contradictory evidence. While some studies have found support for this hypothesis (Cepeda et al., 2012; Fussell, 2011; Negi et al., 2013), others have not (Barranco & Shihadeh, 2015). These mixed results may stem from Shihadeh and Barranco (2010a) finding that Latino employment *indirectly* increased black violence by first increasing black unemployment in urban areas as opposed to a direct relationship between immigration and violence. While unemployment may have increased as a result of Latino immigration, the violence stemming from unemployment rates may not have been directed at immigrants outright. In addition, an increase in black violence was not observed in rural areas even when low skilled employment shifted from black workers to Latinos (Shihadeh & Barranco, 2010b). The perception of targeted robbery or killings of immigrants by African Americans may be more impactful on the racial tension between these groups than the actual prevalence of these encounters (Negi et al., 2013).

Since knowingly hiring an undocumented worker is illegal, however, to circumvent this employers use a “coded language” to indicate preference for workers who have a strong “work ethic” and good “manageability” (Fussell, 2011). While typically referring to undocumented immigrants’ willingness to work arduous jobs for low wages (work ethic) and acquiescence with poor working conditions, endurance of abusive practices, and acceptance of victimization (manageability); a potential interpretation is that employers perceive African Americans as lacking a good work ethic and being difficult to manage. In contrast, employers may stereotype immigrants as hardworking, submissive, and easy targets. Discriminatory stereotyping of African American men, in particular, as ignorant, lacking skill and education, arrogant, and violent has also been noted as negatively affecting employment opportunities (Weatherspoon, 1996). These implicit messages may further increase tension between the two historically marginalized groups. Incoming immigrants are willing to fill traditionally African American jobs (Weatherspoon, 1996), for lower reserve wages (Shihadeh & Barranco, 2010a). The intersecting effect of racial discrimination and economic consideration may result in African Americans may be passed over in favor of the Latino immigrants.

In economic terms, African Americans may be passed over by employers because they are more considered expensive (Shihadeh & Barranco, 2010a). African Americans are more likely to be citizens<sup>3</sup>, are legally entitled to receive minimum wage and certain benefits and legal protections against workplace abuses, and may be more likely to report abuses to authorities. These considerations may veer unscrupulous employers to Latino workers but rather than viewing it as a preference to take advantage of Latino undocumented immigrants, it may appear

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<sup>3</sup> Not to say that there aren’t black undocumented immigrants, however tying back to the stereotyping, employers may perceive Latinos migrant workers as undocumented whereas black migrant workers may be viewed as citizens.

as a prejudice against African Americans who are already historically marginalized and struggling in the formal economy.

While Barranco & Shihadeh (2015) found no support that African American robbers were explicitly targeting Latinos, they did find that Latinos were over 300 percent more likely to be victimized in a high immigrant community than in a low immigrant community. They suggest that while immigrant communities are generally more targeted, the violence may not be intraracial. A key criticism may be the underreporting of immigrant victims.

### **Chapter III: Theoretical Framework**

#### *Routine Activities Theory*

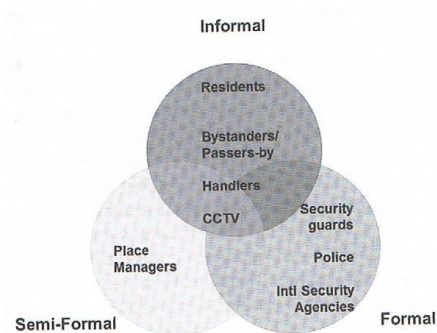
Routine Activities Theory (RAT) suggests that crime occurs when three key elements intersect in time and space: the absence of a capable guardian, a suitable target, and a motivated offender (Cohen & Felson, 1979). Among the criticisms of RAT are the “ambiguous and unexplained” key concepts (Tittle, 1995), the inattention to offender motivation, and the conflation with Lifestyle Theory (Pratt & Turanovic, 2016) regarding “risky lifestyles.” The following section aims to: a) bridge RAT with the literature on offender decision making, b) expand on the unique relationship between immigrants and guardianship, and c) address the ways in which immigrant vulnerability and stereotyping increases the cohesiveness between the three components of Routine Activities thereby increasing the potential for victimization.

While a routine activity approach may be applicable to wage theft perpetration against undocumented immigrants, the focus here will remain on the victimization by active street offenders. This is done for theoretical and practical reasons. First, Cohen and Felson (1979)’s original conceptualization was to address “predatory violations involving direct physical contact” between the offender and the victim. Practically, while an empirical test of the motivations of unscrupulous employers and active street offenders would be an insightful undertaking, it is beyond the scope of this study. There are theoretical reasons to believe that the perpetration of wage theft and robbery are distinct however, we do not have access to employers who utilize the labor of migrant workers so a comparison is not possible using our current sample. For these reasons, our population is restricted to the predatory street offenders who victimize undocumented immigrants by means of robbery, burglary, and carjacking.

## *Guardianship*

The original concept of guardianship consisted of social guardianship and physical guardianship (Cohen & Felson, 1979). The social dimension of guardianship includes capable and willing protectors such as relatives and neighbors. Physical guardianship includes weapons, security systems and other tools to deter or defend against victimization (Cohen & Felson, 1979). Reynald (2011) extended the guardianship literature and categorizes social guardianship into three subgroups: formal, semi-formal, and informal guardians.

Figure 1: Types of Guardians and Related Crime Controllers<sup>4</sup>



Reynald (2010) intertwines the relationship between informal and formal guardians in several ways. First, informal guardians are best positioned for deterrence prior to and interception during victimization, whereas formal guardians are called upon during or post victimization. Of course, formal guardianship may also deter or intercept victimization, but due to scarce resources, it is more likely that informal guardians will alert formal authorities. Indeed, Reynald (2010) found that of informal guardians willing to intervene, the most frequent form of intervention was to contact police (i.e. formal guardians) for serious situations.

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<sup>4</sup> Reproduced with permission from author. For original discussion, see *Guarding Against Crime: Measuring Guardianship within Routine Activities Theory* by Danielle M. Reynald.

In this thesis, I hope to further expand on the intricate relationship between guardianship and undocumented immigrants using Reynald's expanded model of guardianship. First, while formal guardianship such as law enforcement is viewed as an available resource to all citizens, regardless of whether or not victims report. There are many considerations attached to whether or not undocumented immigrants report victimization to the police. These considerations can include any combination of the hypotheticals including whether the individual or their social networks had experienced corrupt law enforcement in their country of origin (Pogrebin & Poole, 1990a; Menjivar & Bejarano, 2004), the victim's proficiency in English (Cepeda et al., 2012; Kubrin, 2013; Vidales et al., 2009), their belief about how their undocumented status affects their rights as a crime victim, state and local laws regarding immigrants as victims (Vidales et al., 2009), whether or not immigrants know their rights (Theodore et al., 2006), whether or not they perceive themselves to have access to services (Berk & Schur, 2001), cultural norms (Messing et al., 2015), as well as other potential factors the literature has not yet identified. It is well documented that immigrants have lower than average protection from victimization, due, in part, to the continued merging of law and immigration enforcement, increasing the fear to seek formal recourse. The availability of legal guardianship is perceived to be absent by both victims and offenders, thereby making immigrants more attractive targets (Barranco & Shihadeh, 2015; Farrell, Phillips, & Pease, 1995).

Perceived lack of access to formal guardianship including law enforcement, has a precedent with other vulnerable populations previously labeled "criminal victims" (Wright & Decker, 2011). These safe targets are those who are victimized during the course of "perpetrating" criminal activity, including sex workers (Chapkis, 2003), drug dealers (Topalli, Wright, & Fornango, 2002), as well as undocumented immigrants (Bucher et al., 2010). As with

sex workers who are raped or drug dealers who are robbed, the expectation on the part of offenders is that undocumented immigrants will not step forward because reporting victimization would involve exposing their undocumented status. Similar to criminal victims, police may dismiss reports of victimization as “not serious,” or may arrest victims due to their “criminal” involvement. Immigrants may be detained due to their status, detained without many of the rights citizen criminals receive and, often, for an undetermined amount of time. They face possible permanent banishment with no discretion offered to mitigating factors such as time in the US, criminal history (aside from status), and family/ social ties. The potential risks of reporting outweigh the benefits. This is not to minimize the victimization of other “criminal victims” or discount the informal factors that influence reporting such as adherence to the code of the street, however it illustrates the increased severity of punishment for what some would argue are unequally severe “crimes.”

While perceived lack of formal guardianship fluctuates based on local and state laws surrounding undocumented immigrants, such as those in controversial “sanctuary cities,” lack of knowledge of rights and resources fuels fear of reporting among immigrant communities. Farrell et al. (1995) state that attackers may feel unconcerned about the potential intervention by capable guardians and such confidence may be well founded. While poised in the context of racial attacks, their rationale parallels current hypotheses in immigration literature. They state:

Reasons [for repeat victimization] include language problems between victims and the police; the apparent lack of seriousness of some of the crimes considered individually; the belief of the victimized group that its members will not be taken seriously by the police (a belief which may also be held by perpetrators) leading incidents to remain unreported (p. 389).

This lack (or perceived lack) of access to formal guardians leaves protection of undocumented immigrants in the hands of semi-formal and informal guardians. Undocumented

immigrants are likely to hold off-the-books employment which poses risks for managers and overseers of companies (Theodore et al., 2006). Since it is illegal to (knowingly) hire an undocumented immigrant, it is likely that the semi-formal guardians will not hold any loyalty to those victimized. In addition, researchers have documented immigrants' experiences with workplace abuses (Theodore et al., 2006), wage theft (Fussell, 2011; Theodore et al., 2006), threatening immigrants with ICE (Cepeda et al., 2012) and even holding workers hostage (Villalón, 2010). While this obviously is not always the case, it provides a preliminary groundwork for why undocumented immigrants are unlikely to rely on semi-formal guardians.

Immigrants perceived lack of access to formal guardianship and weak or non-existent connections to semi-formal guardianship implies virtually complete reliance on informal guardianship. This may also be problematic. Reynald (2010) reported that neighborhoods with the highest number of non-western immigrants also had the highest percentage of residents unwilling to act as informal guardians. She lists potential reasons as an individual's sense of responsibility, level of (formal) training, risk to personal safety, availability (or lack) of tools for protection and physical competence (Reynald, 2010). Sense of responsibility and risk to personal safety stand out in this context. While studies have shown that immigrants form ethnic enclaves (Pérez, 2001), some research has shown that immigrants/ Latinos are over 300 times more likely to be victimized in a high immigrant neighborhood (Barranco & Shihadeh, 2015). Taken together, this may suggest that immigrants are more likely to be victimized in their own neighborhoods while informal guardians do not intervene. They may also be distrustful of one another. Cepeda (2012) found that her undocumented respondents were distrustful of their immigrant peers alleging "they'll rob you." In Negi, Cepeda, and Valez (2013), respondents indicated that it was "especially distressing when they were victimized or robbed in the



neighborhoods that they lived in as it deteriorated their trust in their neighbors (p.364)." It is possible that high rates of victimization either from outsiders or individuals within the neighborhood result in a disengagement between the individual and the environment. In addition, if it is assumed that an undocumented immigrant lives in a community among other undocumented immigrants, it is possible that a witness who also lacks documentation will fear calling the police due to potential repercussions of becoming involved as a witness.

If victimization occurs in a low-immigrant area, local residents may not only not intervene, but may consider immigrants the suspicious individuals. For example, in Reynald's (2010) study, participant 52 stated: "What strikes me as suspicious depends on the context. If you see a neat looking, well-dressed man here, it is not strange. But someone whose appearance looks unattended is notable. So are immigrants." (p.12). While Reynald states that "clothing, physical appearance and ethnicity" were the least mentioned characteristics in her participants' view of "suspicious" individuals, it is noteworthy that a participant explicitly highlighted immigrants, since there is no visual means to identify an immigrant. This indicates that they are identified through other means, such as social cues. This feeds back into the deeply rooted mainstream stereotype that immigrants are criminals or, at the very least, suspicious.

### *Suitable Targets*

Part of the rationale for scarcity of guardianship for undocumented immigrants stems from their criminogenic stereotype. Undocumented immigrants occupy a legal space somewhere between criminal and non-criminal. Their immigration status becomes the defining characteristic by which legal decisions are made. While less likely than native-born citizens to engage in criminal activity (Wang, 2012), their very presence on U.S. soil is in violation of immigration law (Bucher et al., 2010). For this reason, it is expected that the targeting and victimization of

immigrants, specifically those assumed to be undocumented (Fussell, 2011), will parallel those for other “criminal” victims. However, the advantage of targeting undocumented immigrants is opportune for perpetrators. The rewards are likely to surpass those of both criminal and non-criminal victims because, like other non-criminal victims, they are unlikely to retaliate (Negi et al., 2013) but, like criminal victims, they are unlikely to contact law enforcement. Farrell et al. (1995) argues that when rewards are high (cash) and risk is low (no guardian interference), the victim is more likely to be victimized either by the same offender or by other offenders seeking the same vulnerabilities.

Cohen and Felson (1979) define target suitability as:

Target suitability is likely to reflect such things as value (i.e., the material or symbolic desirability of a personal or property target for offenders), physical visibility, access, and the inertia of a target against illegal treatment by offenders (including the weight, size, and attached or locked features of property inhibiting its illegal removal and the physical capacity of personal victims to resist attackers with or without weapons (p.591).

Undocumented immigrants are hypothesized to make suitable targets based on a number of factors including; a) their perceived illegal status (Barranco & Shihadeh, 2015; Bucher et al., 2010; Fussell, 2011; Negi et al., 2013); b) their English illiteracy or accented speech (Barranco & Shihadeh, 2015; Bucher et al., 2010; Cepeda et al., 2012; Fussell, 2011; Shihadeh & Barranco, 2010c; Vidales et al., 2009); c) their length of residence (Bucher et al., 2010); d) the perceived ease in identification (migrant worker locations) (Negi et al., 2013; Theodore et al., 2006); e) the belief that they carry cash as opposed to depositing earnings in a bank (Barranco & Shihadeh, 2015; Bucher et al., 2010; Fussell, 2011; Martinez & Valenzuela Jr, 2006; Negi et al., 2013); f) the perceived inability or reluctance to retaliate (Negi et al., 2013) and g) the reluctance to report victimization to police for fear of deportation (Fussell, 2011; Golash-Boza, 2015; Negi et al., 2013).

a. Immigration Status

Fiske and Taylor (2013) identify immigration status as one of the “most frequent intergroup distinctions in the United States at this time” (p.282). This distinction starts at a structural level that trickles down to interpersonal interactions. The separation of human and citizen rights is the underlying distinction in immigration law that creates a power dynamic between citizens and noncitizens, ultimately exposing immigrants to interpersonal victimization. The reduction of immigrant rights in regard to access to resources (Berk & Schur, 2001), reporting of victimization (Messing et al., 2015), and deportation proceeding (Brotherton & Barrios, 2011) propels fear in immigrant communities resulting in a population of suitable targets who fear deportation (Fussell, 2011) and distrust police (Menjívar & Bejarano, 2004; Vidales et al., 2009) and medical professionals (Berk & Schur, 2001). Goffman (1963) states that the vulnerability of a stigmatized individual may be too tempting to pass up, even by nonstigmatized individuals who would not normally victimize another. Beyond the motivated street offender, undocumented immigrants are especially vulnerable to exploitation by documented individuals, who may even do so unintentionally, including employers, lawyers, police officers, service providers, medical professionals, and relatives.

The stigma and exploitation of undocumented immigrants by mostly law abiding or authority members of mainstream society can trickle down to offenders who use stereotypes as justification or neutralization for their crimes. Since citizenship is not a visible characteristic, the stigmatization of Latino immigrants also spreads to U.S. born Latinos who are cast as “alien-citizens” and treated as “foreigners despite their birthright” (Chavez, 2013, p.7). Mainstream stereotypes of Latinos as “illegals” may influence victim selection for offenders who select vulnerable populations for one time or repeat victimization (Farrell et al., 1995) based on

perceived immigration status. Subsequently, their immigration status becomes a barrier to accessing legal services. For example, Negi and colleagues (2013) reported that Latino day laborers chose not to report victimization because they felt that police would "side" with the African American criminals who victimized them based on the offender's citizenship status and the victims' lack of documentation. In line with domestic violence literature, Villalón (2010) reported that immigrant victims were told by their (often citizen) abusers that the police would deport them if they reported abuse, and for some who attempted to do so, found their abusers' threats to be true.

b. Location/ Length of Residence

The body of literature on immigration and crime has repeatedly noted that new immigrants frequently settle in high crime, impoverished, urban neighborhoods with few social support systems (Hagan & Palloni, 1998; Martinez & Valenzuela Jr, 2006). Location of residence, in particular, aligns with the "access" aspect of target suitability. While much of this literature has focused on the study of immigrant criminality (Martinez & Valenzuela Jr, 2006), gang involvement (Gans, 1992), and violence (Martinez Jr & Martinez, 2014), as with other groups residing in comparable areas, the proneness to victimization increases with increased proximity to motivated offenders.

"Immigrant/ Latino Paradox" suggests that contrary to the inverse relationship between economic deprivation and violence, immigrant communities that suffer from extreme deprivation do not experience the same level of violence as other ethnic groups (Martinez & Valenzuela Jr, 2006). There has been some debate in the literature, however. Shihadeh and Barranco (2010c) argue that the "paradox" is only found in "traditional" destinations where immigrants have long settled and established themselves. New destinations are communities that have not traditionally

experienced immigration settlements and are not as protective to new arrivals. Shihadeh and Barranco (2010c) argue that these communities lack the formal and informal social support networks for immigrants and therefore increase conflict between the native residents and the new immigrants. These conflicts appear to result in increased homicide rates. Compared to the white homicide rate of 4.77 per 100,000, Latino homicide for traditional destinations was 6.3 and 9.06 in new destinations. While homicide rates in new destinations were almost double the white homicide rate, it remains lower than the black homicide rate of 13.43 per 100,000 (Shihadeh & Barranco, 2010c).

Bucher et al. (2010) found the most frequent form of victimization for undocumented immigrants was theft, with the likelihood of victimization increasing when the victim was new to the country, new to their residence, or with increasing numbers of cohabitants in their residence (Bucher et al., 2010). Victimization increases stemming from newness to the country or to the residence may, in part, result from victims not having sufficient social ties and informal guardians to protect themselves and their belongings. Similarly, cohabitation may not be a source of guardianship when cohabitants are strangers or acquaintances. These relationships may not be strong enough to develop expectations of guardianship and may actually increase victimization since potential offenders have easy access to the residence. Negi et al. (2013) reported that home invasions/ burglary indicated to immigrant victims that their neighbors were familiar with their work patterns and that cash earnings were hidden in their residence. While their living conditions (high crime neighborhoods, living with multiple men, etc.) increased their likelihood of victimization, many felt that there was no escaping these conditions (Negi et al., 2013).

### c. English Illiteracy

English illiteracy or accented speech has been identified as a “major liability” (Shihadeh & Barranco, 2010c) and vulnerability for victimization (Cepeda et al., 2012; Fussell, 2011) including homicide (Shihadeh & Barranco, 2010c) because it may signal recent arrival to the United States (and therefore unfamiliarity with local neighborhoods or laws) or act as an indication of undocumented status (Fussell, 2011). Shihadeh and Barranco (2010c) argue that immigrants who settle in traditional destinations have the protection of common language. However, the “linguistic isolation” of new destinations prevents new arrivals from picking up social cues that signal safe areas from dangerous ones and may “draw hostility” from English speaking natives (Shihadeh & Barranco, 2010c).

Linguistic isolation harms economic growth for immigrants by reducing wages and employment prospects (Shihadeh & Barranco, 2010c). Latinos in particular “are disproportionately penalized in the labor market when they do not speak English well.” (Calavita, 1996, p. 218). While Latino poverty in traditional areas had no “demonstrable effect on homicide, new destinations... provide no such protective benefit...” (Shihadeh & Barranco, 2010c). Shihadeh and Barranco (2010c) find an indirect effect between linguistic isolation and homicide victimization through the increase of economic deprivation.

In addition to hurting employment prospects, English illiteracy increases the likelihood of being arrested after an altercation with employers or domestic partners. In cases of wage theft, altercations between immigrants and employers over payment due that involved the police have often worked against the immigrants when there was a language barrier. Immigrants reportedly had their complaint dismissed or, worse, were arrested after officers sided with English speaking employers (Cepeda et. al., 2012). Villalón (2010) found that undocumented victims of domestic

violence were also more likely to be arrested or be transferred to immigration if police were called to report their English-speaking abusers (p.77). In relation to this study, offenders may overhear Spanish speech and, combined with other social cues, attribute Spanish speech to English illiteracy. Offenders assume that individuals are unable or unwilling to report victimization due to language barriers (and perhaps, by proxy, immigration status).

#### d. Ease in Identification

Ease in identifiability ties into the “physical visibility” aspect of target suitability. During target selection, Wright and Decker (1997) found that robbers reported ease in acting spontaneously because offenders were familiar with their intended victims and knew where to find them. While their work focused on street level drug dealers, it parallels the ease in identifying migrant worker locations. These "informal hiring sites" are easily visible with concentrated groups of often undocumented Latino men (Theodore et al., 2006). These sites include "connected" sites located near building supply stores or other businesses, "unconnected" sites along busy roads or public spaces, and "regulated" sites operated by community organizations (Theodore et. al., 2006; Valenzuela, 2003). While targeting a migrant worker location does not guarantee that the selected target is undocumented, Theodore and colleagues (2006) reported that three quarters (74 percent) of the day laborers surveyed (n=290) were undocumented and noted that documented immigrants and those with more formal skillsets opt to seek better paying, more stable employment. Similarly, Fussell’s (2011) study of Latino migrants in Post Katrina New Orleans revealed that about 90 percent of her sample (n=198) were unauthorized.

Negi and colleagues (2013) reported that the "high risk exposure" of seeking employment of public street corners made Latino day laborers easily identifiable by street level criminals and

the perception that they carry cash branded them easy targets, perpetuating the "walking ATM" perspective. Simultaneously, "day labor corners" act as a protective space against criminal victimization, but the risk was highest outside this space, particularly after leaving after working a job (Negi et. al., 2013). Offenders may openly target these locations or the surrounding perimeter in order to capitalize on the physical visibility and open accessibility of targets.

e. Engagement in a Cash Economy

Cash epitomizes the value aspect of target suitability and is well known to be central to criminal activity. The "liquidity" and "anonymity" of cash's transactional nature fuels the legal and illegal economies. In a society where crime has declined proportionately to the reduction of cash flow to the inner city streets (Wright et al., 2014), undocumented immigrants remain one of the few sources of victims who engage in a predominantly cash economy. Cash is critical to an illicit economy however, while Routine Activities Theory would suggest that the more cash someone has the more likely they are to be victimized, this notion requires more research. Bucher et al. (2010) found that despite theft and robbery as the most frequent victimizations of the undocumented immigrants in their sample (n=90), the amount of cash in the residence was not significant. The authors suggest that while undocumented immigrants may be targeted for the perception that they carry cash, perpetrators have no way of knowing they cash value targets possess prior to the robbery (Bucher et al., 2010).

The combined vulnerabilities of engaging a cash economy and inability to contact law enforcement has been dubbed the "walking ATM" phenomenon by media and previous academic literature (Barranco & Shihadeh, 2015; Nossiter, 2009). Street criminals are aware that undocumented immigrants are "typically paid in cash, do not have bank accounts, and therefore carry large quantities of cash." (Fussell, 2011; Martinez & Valenzuela Jr, 2006). Employers



typically pay day laborers in cash to avoid detection by government labor regulation agencies and workers prefer this method because it results in no tax deductions and decreases the likelihood of being issued a "bad check" (Theodore et al., 2006).

f. Inability to Fight Back or Retaliate

The inability to defend oneself or retaliate aligns with the “inertia of a target against illegal treatment by offenders” (Cohen & Felson, 1979). Unlike drug dealer victims who, depending on the status and influence in the criminal underworld, may retaliate for a stick-up (Wright & Decker, 2011), first generation immigrants are least likely to be engaged in criminal activity (Wang, 2012; Chavez, 1992; De Genova, 2002; Gomberg Muñoz, 2010). This is important to note since first generation immigrants are most likely to be undocumented, least likely to report victimization (Messing et. al, 2015), and therefore perhaps less likely to engage in retaliation as theorized by the code of the street (Anderson, 1999). Negi et al. (2013) noted this from their drug-using study participants. "The [Latino day laborers] that did report using drugs indicated that they were often cheated by dealers who would take their cash and refuse to give them their drug of choice as they were unlikely to retaliate." (p. 363) Additionally, in much the same way that some drug dealers “dismissed robberies as an occupational hazard and accepted their losses” (Wright & Decker, 2011), immigration literature has found a similar trend of accepting victimization as a collateral consequence of their undocumented status (Fussell, 2011). For robbers who weigh the benefits and risks of offending, these considerations may play a crucial role in target selection.

g. Fear of Law Enforcement

The fear of deportation and the collateral consequences including separation from family in the United States, returning to a country plagued with violence, poverty or returning to a

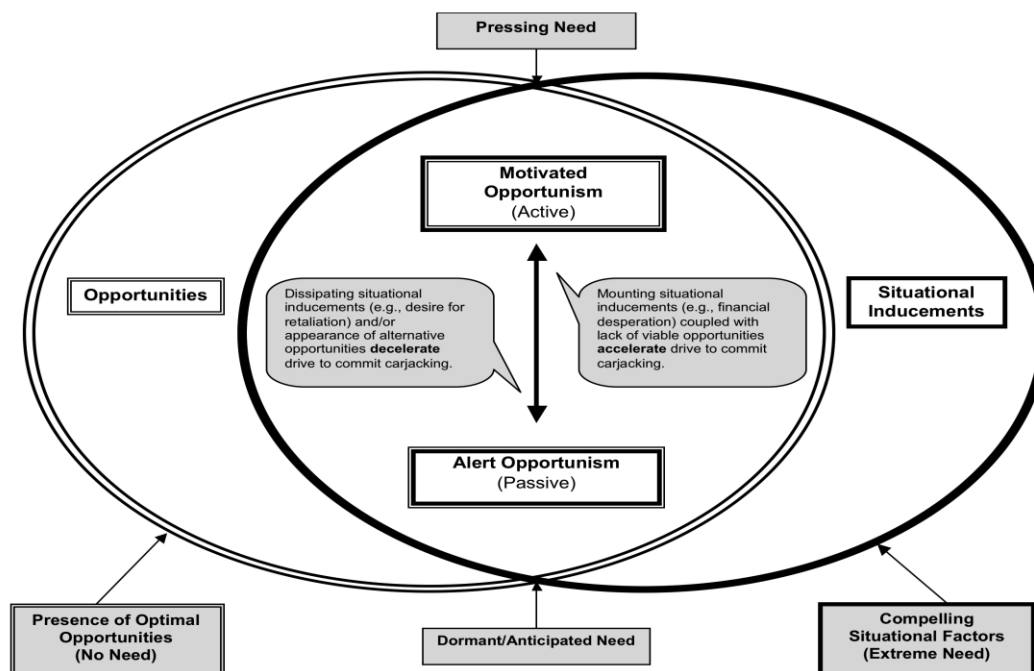
country that was left decades prior, underline immigrant victims' reluctance to report victimization. As previously noted, the merging of immigration and police enforcement was initially conceived to target undocumented criminals who were arrested for criminal activities but, in practice, resulted in cases where victims were reported to ICE and Latino communities became targets of discriminatory police practices in search of immigrants. Media perpetuates this fear by sensationalizing individual cases of domestic violence victims (Gonzales, 2017; Lockhart, 2017), protesters (Hensch, 2017), children (Neuman, 2017), students (Smeltz, 2017), and non-violent individuals with misdemeanors convictions (Sacchetti & Olivo, 2017) being detained and deported by ICE. This makes rare events appear more frequent than in actuality and incites fear in vulnerable groups. It has been documented that offenders including domestic abusers (Villalón, 2010) and employers (California, 2010; Cepeda et al., 2012) has weaponized this fear as a tool to justify victimization of vulnerable undocumented immigrants. Regardless of who victimizes the immigrants, many victimizations go unreported and, in turn, unpunished and unaddressed by law enforcement because the potential consequences to reporting are deemed to outweigh the benefits.

### *Motivated Offender*

Each vulnerability adds a layer of attractiveness to immigrants as targets. Combined with the perceived lack of guardianship, RAT would predict a higher rate of victimization than other groups, regardless of offender motivation. However, the following section addresses a long-standing criticism of the theory, the lack of emphasis on offender motivation. This section dissects the factors of offender motivation while also addressing how the first two components, lack of guardianship and target attractiveness, work in tandem to increase motivation.

While Cohen and Felson (1979) assume a motivated offender, Topalli and Wright (2013) describe the fluctuation in motivation among active street offenders. In line with Cohen and Felson's assertion that offenders and victims have an "interdependent predatory relationship," a target's vulnerability or perceived vulnerability influence an offender's motivation (Topalli & Wright, 2013). Topalli and Wright (2013) provide a foreground model of alert and motivated opportunism. The model suggests that offenders are in a state of "alert opportunism" when their need for cash is anticipated but not pressing (Bennett & Wright, 1984) and move toward "motivated opportunism" when internal or external pressures (such as need for cash or drugs) increase (Topalli & Wright, 2013). Optimal opportunities provide quick and easy cash but such opportunities are scarce.

Figure 2: Foreground Model of Alert and Motivated Opportunism<sup>5</sup>



<sup>5</sup> Reprinted with expressed written consent from the authors. Original discussion can be found in Topalli and Wright (2013). Affect and the dynamic foreground of predatory street crime. *Affect and cognition in criminal decision making*, 42.

The Walking ATM phenomenon describes the discovery of undocumented immigrants as an optimal opportunity for predatory street crime since a) immigrants carry cash that fuel offender's lifestyle, b) they are not likely to fight back and are therefore "easy targets" and c) the potential payout for their victimization is less risky than robbing other offenders or lay people due to reduced risk of retaliation and/ or police involvement. Undocumented immigrants are considered "low hanging" targets and the mere stereotype of undocumented status is likely sufficient to increase victimization of Latinos. Offenders who target undocumented immigrants successfully will likely perceive this population as an ample source of future targets.

Since offenders are a subculture within the mainstream society, particularly active street offenders who are, by definition, entrenched in society. As members of the larger society, they are exposed to negative rhetoric of undocumented immigrants and may absorb these perceptions. The perception that immigrants are to blame for unemployment may leave offenders to believe that immigrants are to blame for their inability to find decent wage, legitimate employment and limited opportunities for their communities. The rhetoric that undocumented immigrants who are victimized, "shouldn't have been here in the first place" may act as justification for offenders to neutralize any guilt or remorse they may otherwise feel.

Preventative actions by potential victims may influence offenders to pursue more vulnerable targets (Cohen & Felson, 1979), but a population deemed extremely vulnerable and lacking guardianship are likely to be disproportionately victimized, even when motivation is low. Topalli and Wright (2013) argue that fear is an inhibitory emotion and the best way to slow or disrupt an active predatory offender's motivation of commit crime is to "manipulate the offender's experience of fear through... target hardening." For the reasons previously described,

offenders are unlikely to fear repercussions from targeting undocumented immigrants because, in their view, there are unlikely to be any.

Fussell (2011) identifies the cycle of exploitation and victimization between undocumented migrants and the employers or robbers who seek to profit off them. In what she calls the "deportation threat dynamic," she identifies four steps that fuel the victimization of migrants. First, the unauthorized migrant finds employment. Next, the offender stereotypes the target as undocumented. Third, the offender commits wage theft or robbery. Finally, the victim does not report victimization. The associated violence, duration, and frequency of occurrence vary based on whether the offense was inflicted by a robber or an employer, the migrants' relationship with a perpetrator, and whether a migrant worker is a day laborer or has stable employment (Fussell, 2011).

### *Conclusion*

Much of the robbery literature on undocumented immigrants was conducted in New Orleans during the post-Katrina rebuilding efforts (Cepeda et al., 2012; Fussell, 2011; Negi et al., 2013). Ten percent of undocumented immigrants in New Orleans reported being robbery victims (Fussell, 2011) however the vulnerabilities identified by the literature and the systemic structure of victimization identified by the deportation threat dynamic are relevant and, arguably, generalizable to other cities in the United States with large population of Latino residents, particularly undocumented immigrants (Fussell, 2011). The current study will look at the targeting of undocumented immigrants in a more stable (i.e. non-disaster) environment where the population demographics are arguably more stable and there may not be the same tension between the two groups.

## Chapter IV: Methods

### *Participants*

The interviews for this study were collected between September and October 2017, and merged with the data collection efforts of previous studies<sup>6</sup> on carjacking, robbery, and drug dealing (Brezina, Tekin, & Topalli, 2009; Topalli, Brezina, & Bernhardt, 2013; Topalli, Jacques, & Wright, 2015). In all, 11 interviews from Atlanta based street offenders were collected or merged from previous collection efforts.

The offenders ranged from 20 to 48 years old. All participants were African American. Offenders are considered active if their offending was the main source of income at the time of the interview. The predominant trade of offenders interviewed is broken down by gender below.

Figure 3: Predominant Trade of Interviewed Offenders

Predominant Trade	Male	Female
Robber	5	1
Carjacker	4	0
Drug Dealer	1	0

### *Recruitment*

Two African American recruiters were employed across these studies, with the most recent data collection utilizing a single recruiter. Recruiters are previous offenders who have networks with the active offender population. Their support is essential to the recruitment efforts and the use of recruiters has an established tradition with active offender research (Brezina et al.,

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<sup>6</sup> The author wishes to thank Dr. Volkan Topalli for making a portion of these interviews available for this paper.

2009; Topalli et al., 2013; Topalli et al., 2015; Wright & Decker, 2011). Recruiters are provided a “protocol” with the project inclusion criteria, statement on confidentiality and coercion, a sample script, the location of the research site, and contact information for the principal investigator. Recruiters are tasked with narrowing potential participants and escorting them to the research team for additional screening. For this study, the recruiter enlisted potential participants from predominant African American neighborhoods and invited individuals who regularly victimized “Mexicans” to participate. Establishing bonds of trust with white offenders was therefore not a realistic prospect because these individuals were not part of their social networks. This is a flaw with the snowball sampling design, however it is more attributed to the small sample size of this project, further discussed under limitations.

### *Compensation*

Offenders and recruiters were paid<sup>7</sup> for their participation, generally \$60 to recruiters for each successful recruitment and \$50 to interviewees for their cooperation and time.

### *Data Collection and Analysis*

Collected interviews were conducted between September and October 2017 and took place predominantly in a private University Office. Potential participants were briefed on the study, had the consent form read aloud to them, then asked if they were interested in participating. Participants who refused to be interviewed on campus were interviewed by Dr. Volkan Topalli at Atlanta Underground, a shopping mall-style area a few blocks from the Georgia State University campus. Interviews were semi-structured, but included many of the questions from the interview protocol in Appendix 1. Interviews ranged from approximately 15 to 60 minutes. They were tape recorded using a Livescribe smart pen recorder

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<sup>7</sup> Funds provided by National Science Foundation. Grant # 0520092.

(<https://www.livescribe.com/en-us/>) with the permission of the interviewees with names and other identifying information stricken from the transcriptions. Three interviewees, however, refused to be recorded and therefore detailed notes were taken during interviews.

Upon completion of each interview, the audio recording was transferred from the Livescribe equipment to the Principal Investigators encrypted external hard drive, transcribed within seven days, then deleted from the external hard drive. Labeling for the audio recording (prior to deletion) and the transcripts followed the format: Interview #, date, time.

All transcribed interviews were analyzed using the NVIVO qualitative research analysis program (<http://www.qsrinternational.com/nvivo-product>). Coding included nodes labeled “target vulnerability,” “immigration status,” “cash economy,” “anticipated police intervention,” “stereotyping,” “victim-offender overlap,” “lifestyle choices,” “robbery,” “burglary,” “carjacking,” and “group victimization.” Each node corresponded with themes presented in the literature review sections on Stereotyping, Minority Threat Framework, and Routine Activities Theory. However, it is important to note that many vulnerabilities posed by other scholars and presented in the previous chapters are not discussed by offenders and are therefore not included in the list of nodes above.



## Chapter V: Results

These interviews support the expected outcomes that street offenders use stereotyping methods to identify and target victims. Specifically, ethnicity (as determined by skin complexion and Spanish speech), perceived vulnerability, and appearance (such as clothing) was utilized as cues for immigration status. Some offenders also utilized the stereotypes regarding economic threat as a neutralization method, justifying victim targeting.

### *Stereotyping*

The offenders interviewed conflated ethnicity with immigration status, as is evident through their use of the term “Mexican” to refer to undocumented immigrants<sup>8</sup>. Some acknowledged that this assumption was just that, but many insisted on being able to distinguish between “types.” During our description of the project with offenders, we referred to our population of interest as “immigrants,” “people from other countries,” and “Latinos.” Interviewee N interrupted us and said, “you can call them Mexicans... that’s what they are.”

### *Complexion and Speech*

Supporting my first expected outcome, offenders used skin complexion and Spanish speech as cues for immigration status:

J: “...when I seen that the dude was a Spanish guy I knew we could take him. He was illegal.”

INT: “Well isn’t that a stereotype? How do you know that he was illegal? Maybe he was as citizen. How do you know?”

J: “He got caramel skin? He talk with that accent? His name be Jesus or Pedro? He illegal. They all are. It ain’t a stereotype if it’s true.” -Interview J, Carjacker

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<sup>8</sup> The label “Mexican” is used by offenders and therefore analysis in the following sections reference the targets accordingly. This is by no way meant to offend individuals of Mexican descent or to suggest that all undocumented immigrants are Mexican or vice versa. Rather, this is a telling finding supporting my expectation regarding target stereotyping.

“...for real, [we picked him] ‘cuz he was a Mexican. You know, these Mexicans, they come from Mexico or Nicaragua or whatever, and they illegal.” -Interview B, carjacker

“Yeah he [spoke English]. Like I said, he was Mexican but wasn't no illegal.” - Interview X

“They didn't speak no English. How you gonna be legal in America and speak no English? The legal Mexicans speak English. The illegal ones don't.” - Interview Z

Some offenders acknowledged that they or their acquaintances stereotype individuals based on perceived vulnerability. One of the main distinctions offenders made between “Mexicans” was involvement in crime. They identified three types of “Mexicans” based on immigration status and their corresponding vulnerability: Legal Mexicans, drug cartels, and illegal “working men.”

“...there’s a difference between an esé and an amigo. An amigo is a farmer. And an esé is a gangster.” -Interview F, Drug Distributor

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“The ones that are legal, they got their own businesses. So they not working under folks, they working with folks. The ones that standing on the corner and stuff, jumpin in trucks, some of those are illegal, you know... When they driving and they got their own businesses like doing the carpets and floors, that’s how you know they are legal.” -Interview G, Robber

INT: So you don’t go after those kind of people?

G: Nah.

Most interviewees indicated that targeting Mexicans was less about prejudice and more related to their perceived vulnerability.

“It’s really not that [prejudice], it’s basically that the weak will get eaten. They’re vulnerable... people want stuff that’s easy... people don’t want to hurt nobody, people don’t want to kill nobody. People don’t want to shoot nobody because that’s life<sup>9</sup>.” -Interview F, Drug Distributor

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<sup>9</sup> “Life” here is not used in the context of the value of human life. Life here refers to the possibility of life imprisonment for committing violent felonies.

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F: When you get to a certain level, a minority is a minority. So all of us is together... It becomes a family thing.

INT: O that's interesting because for some people, there's friction. Like Oh, they Mexican comin' here taking our jobs.

F: No. It's where the dope comes from. And the Columbians. They making it. They beefin' out there. It has nothing to do with us.

\* \* \*

"Well some folks [are prejudiced toward immigrants] but I don't, me personally. But some people do 'cause they be like 'o they be coming down here getting all the jobs, they working for little or nothing' you know, some folks do... I know they hard workers. That's all I know. My opinion about them... Some folks, they're good, some folks are bad. Some of them don't like us anyway..." - Interview G, Robber

As previously discussed, offenders are a subculture within the larger society and therefore absorb some of the mainstream values in a warped variation. Specifically, some offenders utilized mainstream stereotypes to justify victimizing immigrants.

"...They all illegal... That's the risk you take, comin' here takin' people's jobs, working for cash money. That's the price you pay... For real, I don't like 'em. They come here working jobs. I mean shit I can do those jobs. Why they hiring some motherfucker can't speak no English? You know why? They work cheap. They don't cost no taxes. They don't pay no taxes. It all under the table. So, they taking jobs." -Interview Y

An interesting note is that one offender refused to discuss targeting immigrants in the presence of the Latina interviewer. He told the male interviewer "she look like 'em" and was concerned that she would "go back and tell her boys." This transgression provides some indication that offenders may not be able to tell the difference between ethnicities and may stereotype all Latinos as "illegals" or, at the minimum, knowing each other.

## Routine Activities Theory

### *Suitable Target*

Many of the hypotheses put forth by previous scholars, as outlined in the suitable target section, were substantiated by offenders as reasons for target selection. Perceived immigration status was the cornerstone by which other attributes of vulnerability were based. Specifically, the victim's perceived immigration status reinforced stereotypes of target vulnerability including English illiteracy, ease in identification, engagement in a cash economy and fear of law enforcement. The following quotes focus on immigrants as "easy" or suitable targets, ease in identification, and engagement in a cash economy. English illiteracy is discussed in stereotyping and fear of law enforcement is discussed under guardianship.

Mexicans are "easy money"

Most of the offenders interviewed regarded targeting undocumented immigrants as "easy" money. The perceived vulnerability based on stereotypes increased the likelihood of targeting either by offenders who explicitly sought out particular locations or took advantage of a presented opportunity.

"It's kind of like, easy money if you like Mexicans. From time to time I still target Mexicans" -Interview R, Robber

"They are easy targets, basically...Because folks know that they got their cash on 'em. They just know. Cause if they legal, they just know Mexicans like keep all of their cash. They don't put it into a bank account. They all live in like the same house." -Interview G, Robber

### Ease in Identification

The ease in identification ties into the physical visibility and routine activities of undocumented immigrants, with a particular focus on day laborers, dubbed "working men" by offenders. Since migrant worker locations are typically visible, public locations, we expected

that street offenders would target these locations. As Wright and Decker (2011) note, active street offenders know where to find their intended targets. To our surprise, offenders who targeted undocumented immigrants identified liquor stores and check-cashing businesses, particularly on Fridays and Saturdays, as prime locations for targeting victims but rarely mentioned migrant worker locations.

“I know this liquor store, a lot of Mexicans get their checks cashed there... Man, there be like 40 of ‘em every Friday and Saturday.” -Interview R, Robber

“I mean like they’re so easy to target like Fridays, Saturdays, liquor store. If you have balls that an easy thousand dollars ... get like 8, 3, 4 thousand dollars. And that’s just about anywhere you go.” -Interview R, Robber

“You know, one of them small places, like a quickie shop, a corner store. Them places got liquor. Mexicans love them some liquor after work. Beer. They drink beer. So we figured he going to get some beer. So we waited on him, and then he come out the store with like, two cases of beer.” -Interview X

“Uh, it was like late Friday, about 7 or 8 o clock and he still had on work clothes and vest.” -Interview R, Robber

“These Mexicans, you know, they work all day all night man. I see them hanging out in front of the Home Depot all the time. Looking for work. And they not supposed to be here, you know?” -Interview S

These quotes highlight several key elements of the routine activities of immigrant targets. The convergence of the days of the week (Friday, Saturday), location (liquor stores, check-cashing businesses) and appearance (wearing work clothes) indicate to predatory offenders that Latinos they stereotype as Mexicans and therefore undocumented immigrants are cashing their checks after a week of labor and will leave the establishments with cash. The cluster of potential targets means offenders can select the most vulnerable/ suitable target based on other factors. The targeting of undocumented immigrants at these locations is reminiscent of the targeting of welfare recipients prior to the government’s shift toward electronic benefit cards (Wright et al., 2014) and may be the result of situational and individual risk factors.

In addition to liquor stores marked as prime locations for finding targets, victims who were under the influence of drugs or alcohol were particularly likely to be targeted by offenders.

Inebriation decreases the physical capacity of victims to resist attackers.

“They be drunk. They be real drunk and intoxicated and it makes it easier...they be drunk a lot, they be under the influence of different drugs like cocaine, you know... This one time, this dude he had ordered some pizza. He was like drunk. He was staggering. I was like “*aye*” you know, “*mota, mota*”<sup>10</sup>... Its marijuana, like a little reef, ok. He’s like no no no mas, no more. I just knew he had money on ‘em. so I was like boom. He had like \$2500...cash.” -Interview G, Robber

Beyond the capacity to outright resist robbery, inebriation increases the likelihood of victimization by female offenders who seduce their targets and rob them of cash or drugs.

“...they house got everything in it, god damn, they like fine, sexy girls me and my girls.. especially don’t let me get one that’s kinda got some of me in her, you know got some hustle skills. This girl be talking like “these Mexicans, they be having the coke over there, a little weed over there, you might have to ask them for some money, and if they ask you to take off your clothes bitch, steal it out the pocket.” -Interview N, Robber

“I just go about doing it another way. Now, I use females...Man, there be like 40 of ‘em every Friday and Saturday. And, uh, I send a lady or two inside the liquor store. There are like 15 or 20 of them so the odds are on my side...A lot of times, I don’t have to do nothin. They get drunk and they trick out with the money and the women and they just cut the pockets...They just cut the edge with a razor blade and just slide it on out. A lot of [targets] just keep the cash in their pockets. I don’t really like to get involved in what I call ‘petty cash’ and I think what’s in his pocket is petty cash but I will (inaudible)... 3 or 4 of them, make 8, 9 thousand.” -Interview R, Robber

These results support findings by Negi et al. (2013) that engagement in drug or alcohol consumption increases the likelihood of immigrant victimization.

### Cash and other Untraceable Goods

Offenders frequently refer to undocumented Latino immigrants as “working men” and relate their immigration status to their perceived engagement in an all cash economy. This occurs

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<sup>10</sup> Mota is Spanish *slang* for marijuana. The Spanish term for marijuana is the same as in English.

in three ways. First immigrants' "illegal" status results in under the table employment with cash payment. Second, lack of legal status obstructs access to obtaining a bank account, resulting in large sums of cash on the target. Finally, property (particularly vehicles) is assumed to have been purchased with cash and lack the registration and legal documents required for filing a police report. Combined, these assumptions indicate to offenders that targets have valuable and untraceable goods, with no option of reporting due to its "illegal" means of acquisition.

[they] "work all day and get paid cash. Cold hard cash. They always walking around with it. And cash is what I need. Can't buy no dope with a EBT card? Right? Need cash. People don't have no cash on them anymore, but these Mexicans, they always got it." -Interview S, Robber

"They don't do bank accounts. They keep their cash on 'em. They don't do banks so they go to like bodega stores that cash checks then they cash their checks and get 2-3 cases of Dillo or Corona or whatever." -Interview R, Robber

"They can't do shit and they got a lot of money and they keep it on them... They can't put it in no bank... They have cash money... it's right there. It's easy. And they gonna give it to you." -Interview F, Drug Distributor

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G: "They be carrying straight cash on them."

INT: "Does that make them more..."

G: "Of a target? Yeah."

INT: "How come they carrying cash?"

G: "Because they might not, can't get a bank account. They might be illegal."

In addition to robberies, immigrants (or Latinos perceived to be immigrants) were targeted for carjackings. The majority of carjackers who stole a vehicle from "Mexicans" targeted those with trucks. This is likely related to the perception of undocumented immigrants as "working men." Latino men with work trucks were more likely to be stereotyped as undocumented and targeted for auto theft. When a driver was perceived to be an immigrant, active street offenders transferred the same stereotypes they perceived of the owner to the

vehicle. First, just as undocumented immigrants are believed to be paid in cash by their employers, vehicles were believed to have been purchased in cash by their owners. In addition, just as immigrants are perceived to be “illegal” and undocumented, vehicles are stereotyped as lacking legal documentation including registration, real license plates, and insurance.

“...how he get that truck? Paid for it in cash I bet. Where that cash come from? He working man! Working his ass off. For what? For cash that’s what. I bet he have some cash on him, and his wife too. She probably cleaning houses and shit for cash. That’s just how they do.” -Interview D, carjacker

“There were these two guys that I had met one day. They were kinda sketchy about driving their own car. I was like this car must not be right or y’all illegal.” – Interview G, Robber

“It was like a little Honda or whatever. It wasn’t much, but you know I didn’t care. It was probably illegal just like them... You illegal you can’t get no legal car. They probably bought that car on the street and then put some stolen plates on it or something.” -Interview Z, carjacker

### *Guardianship*

As suspected, most of the offenders discussed the lack of formal guardianship (i.e. police officers) as a prime reason they (or acquaintances) target undocumented immigrants.

“... they illegal. So, you know they ain’t goin’ to no police. What you goin’ do? Go to the police and be like, this dude here robbed me for my truck. Police be like, OK, give me your ID so we can write a [police] report. And dude be like, oh shit, well I don’t have no ID ‘cuz I’m here illegal. Police be like, off to jail with your ass then. So, we know when we see them, they ain’t going to the cops.” - Interview B, carjacker

“Dude is illegal probably which mean he ain’t gonna report shit to the police.” - Interview D, carjacker

“...They all illegal. So, they not gonna snitch on theyselves if we knock them. They might get me caught up in jail, but they going to jail too, or they gonna get kicked out of the country. Either way, it ain’t worth it, for what, for some cash they got?” -Interview Y, robber



“...Most of them can’t report crime because they not supposed to be here their self.” -Interview R, robber

“...they all illegal so they can’t go to the cops...” -Interview J, Robber

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INT: “So why do you think people rob amigos or farmers or whatever. What is it about them?”

F: “Shit, well half of them are illegal. First of all, so they can’t call the police...That’s really the main point.”

These findings support previous literature identifying perceived lack of access to law enforcement as a key factor in undocumented immigrant victimization (Davis et al., 2001; Goldsmith, 2005; Menjivar & Bejarano, 2004; Pickett, 2016; Vidales et al., 2009). Interestingly, offenders assumed that even “legal” Mexicans would be reluctant to report victimization if they were associated with “illegals” at the time of the offense.

“...he might be legal, but his employees, those dudes in the truck, they wasn’t legal. How he gonna explain that shit?” -Interview X, carjacker

### Informal Guardianship

As discussed in Chapter III, semi-formal guardianship involves managers and employment settings. Since this study focuses on street victimization, this section will focus on Reynald (2011) idea of informal guardianship.

First, scholars have noted that being alone is a risk factor for victimization (Miethe & Meier, 1990; Miethe, Stafford, & Long, 1987) while others have highlighted the importance of capable guardianship (Reynald, 2010). In the case of “working man” immigrants, even in groups or when perceived to be accompanied by “legal” individuals, targets are perceived to lack capable guardianship. In several instances, offenders explicitly targeted perceived immigrants in groups.

R: No, I didn't take the truck, I just robbed everybody that was in the truck.  
INT: How many people were in the truck?  
R: There was three of 'em.

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“[The driver] was one of them legal Mexicans... we was hyped, cuz we were just gonna rip off the dude, then we was gonna get his buddies and this truck. I mean, we wanted it all. The money, the truck.” Interview X, carjacker

In some cases, offenders targeted the guardian of a group (i.e. male figure of a household), expecting that having vulnerable dependents such as a wife and children would result in submission. In both cases, the men fought back.

“We wanted that truck bad... It was a Spanish guy driving it with his family... I bet he have some cash on him, and his wife too. She probably cleaning houses and shit for cash. That's just how they do. And then, well he got kids in the truck too. Ain't nobody gonna resist you when they got they family in the car. They goin' give it up.” -Interview D, carjacker

INT: So did he give it up?

“You know, actually, no he did not, which was crazy. Dude had no fear. He just got to banging with my boy. The wife and kids be screaming and crying. I'm waving my piece in the air. Dude was straight up fighting us for this truck. I did not expect that shit. I guess Mexicans are hard-core. In the end I got the truck though. Pistol whipped the shit outta him and then put the gun on the wife. That ended it.” -Interview D, carjacker

In the previous quotes, the target is described as a “working man” whereas the following quote was an attempt to rob an *esé* of his drugs.

[The dealer and I] gets outside and [my partner] messed up. We end up going back inside. This is my connect. This is where I buy my weed. His wife just had a newborn baby, she's sitting on the sofa. You know, I can't count the money and he keeps asking me to count the money. I can't count it cause there aint no money to count. So I'm looking at my buddy like I can't stall no more. So he puts the gun on the baby and the dude's wife. You know what the Mexican said? ‘I don't care, I don't care. You wanna kill her, kill her. I don't care.’” -Interview R, Robber

While both men initially put up a struggle, there is a difference in the way the men responded to having the dependents threatened. In the first excerpt, while the “working man” initially put up a struggle, the offender indicated that the struggle was over when they threatened

to kill the wife. Alternatively the “esé” was not fazed by his wife and child being in danger. Instead of offering up his drugs in exchange for their lives, as the robbers expected, he exclaimed “I don’t care” and antagonized the robbers, “[if] you wanna kill her, kill her.” These quotes underline some interesting differences between “esés” and “working men.”

### *Offender Motivation*

While up to this point, the discussed offenders’ process of targeting undocumented immigrants has been treated as separate, distinct events however stereotyping, dehumanizing, and choosing to victimize a suitable target happen in rapid succession:

“The truck was tight. It had nice paint, spinners, all of it. But for real, it was ‘cuz he was a Mexican. You these Mexicans, they come from Mexico or Nicaragua or whatever, and they illegal. So, you know they ain’t goin’ to no police. What you goin’ do? Go to the police and be like, this dude here robbed me for my truck. Police be like, OK, give me your ID so we can write a [police] report. And dude be like, oh shit, well I don’t have no ID ‘cuz I’m here illegal. Police be like, off to jail with your ass then. So, we know when we see them, they ain’t going to the cops. It’s like a freebee. What he going to do, snitch on himself?” -Interview B, carjacker

“We wanted that truck bad. It was tight. It was a Spanish guy driving it with his family. We was like, boom get that. Dude is illegal probably which mean he ain’t gonna report shit to the police. Plus, how he get that truck? Paid for it in cash I bet. Where that cash come from? He working man! Working his ass off. For what? For cash that’s what. I bet he have some cash on him, and his wife too. She probably cleaning houses and shit for cash. That’s just how they do.” -Interview D, carjacker

“These Mexicans, you know, they work all day all night man. I see them hanging out in front of the Home Depot all the time. Looking for work. And they not supposed to be here, you know? Just jump in someone’s truck and work all day and get paid cash. Cold hard cash. They always walking around with it. And cash is what I need. Can’t buy no dope with a EBT card? Right? Need cash. People don’t have no cash on them anymore, but these Mexicans, they always got it.” -Interview S, Robber

Offenders identify target suitability and perceived lack of guardianship based on stereotypes hastily. Their identification of a target as a potential immigrant, easy, carrying cash,

and unable to report is deemed enticing and an optimal opportunities to make quick, easy, and relatively risk-free money.

#### Lack of Anticipated Retaliation

As discussed in Chapter III, undocumented immigrants are likely to be perceived as less risky than targeting other offenders due to the lack of anticipated retaliation. A few offenders mentioned retaliation risk and ranked retaliation risk within their immigrant classification. For example, working men were described as easy and unlikely to fight back whereas retaliation was much more likely among *esés*. Offenders perceived retaliation risk as dependent on: criminal involvement, presence of protection, fear of law enforcement, presence of vulnerable dependents, and language illiteracy.

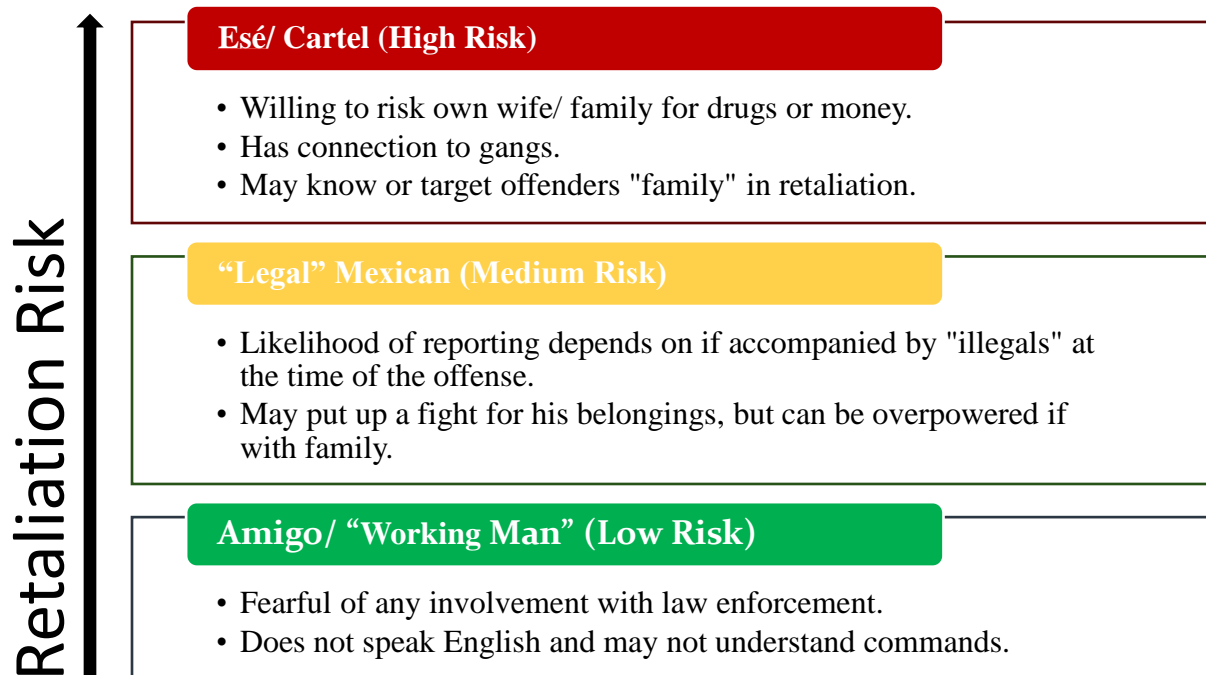
“Not unless you dealing with the cartels...when you dealing with the big, big man. You might have to worry about retaliation. Like, they already be knowing your family.” -Interview G, Robber

“They’re [*amigos*] vulnerable. They don’t fight back, they feel intimidated. Basically judging a book by the cover.” -Interview F, Drug Dealer

“The first time you mention Trump to a Mexican they taking off.” -Interview N, Robber

The figure below ranks perceived retaliation risk based on a collective analysis of the quotes obtained by offenders. Ranking includes perceived “easiness” of a target, the likelihood of fighting back during a victimization, and other suitability factors.

Figure 4: Anticipated Retaliation Risk based on “type” of Mexican



Offenders did not explicitly discuss desperation or anticipated need as influencing their motivation to target undocumented immigrants, but rather, they focused on their elements of vulnerability to influence target selection. Nevertheless, this provided support for Topalli and Wright (2013) model of alert and motivated opportunism. Undocumented immigrants’ engagement in a cash economy, inability to access formal guardianship through law enforcement, and perceived ease in identification and targeting presented the optimal opportunity for victimization.

While in their original formulation of Routine Activity Theory, Cohen and Felson (1979) “assumed” a motivated offender, these preliminary results support previous literature suggesting that street offenders are motivated differently depending on their target’s perceived vulnerability, particularly those identified as “optimal opportunities” (Topalli & Wright, 2013).

## **Chapter VI: Discussion**

This study sought to address the gap in literature regarding the victimization of undocumented immigrants through the perceptions of the street offenders who target them. Specifically, this thesis attempted to answer the questions a) are undocumented immigrants explicitly targeted by active street offenders and b) are the hypothesized vulnerabilities identified in literature through interviews with undocumented victims corroborated as vulnerabilities sought out by predatory street offenders? First, as anticipated, there is a segment of the offender population that explicitly targets undocumented Latino immigrants. Next, I expected that street offenders would corroborate specific vulnerabilities such as immigration status, engaging in a cash economy, and lack of access to law enforcement as reasons for targeting immigrants. Indeed, perceived immigration status influenced offender's perception that stereotyped targets were carrying cash and were unable to report victimization. Finally, it was anticipated that street offenders who targeted undocumented immigrants would target "migrant worker" locations due to their visibility. Interestingly, offenders focused on cash-checking location and liquor stores instead when actively seeking out this population. This unexpected finding may be attributed to the perception that an immigrant at a migrant worker location may not have been successful in obtaining employment compared to the immigrant standing at a check-cashing business. Also, immigrants' presence at liquor stores indicates that the consumption of alcohol may make targeting easier either through the use of a female accomplice or a reduction in the target's ability to resist.

### *Strength and Limitations*

Interviews with Atlanta based street offenders were utilized with the aid of a recruiter, as is often done in predatory street crime literature. It is important to highlight some of the strengths

and limitations regarding this methodology. The strength in this research design lies in its consistently effective recruitment strategy. Active street offenders, by their very nature as offenders, are not likely to seek out or trust opportunities via conventional research means (such as flyers, online surveys, etc.). In addition, the use of a recruiter facilitates the seed of trust required for offenders to openly discuss criminal activity with a stranger.

Alternatively, there are several methodological limitations to this research design. First, this research relies on the self-reporting of victim targeting strategies by a population that may be reluctant to provide such insight into their operations. While this did not appear to be the case among this sample, it is important to note that the sample size is much smaller than many previous analyses of offender interviews (Topalli, 2005) and immigrant victimization surveys (Cepeda et al., 2012; Negi et al., 2013; Theodore et al., 2006). Next, offenders relied heavily on stereotyping to identify potential targets and may have incorrectly assumed immigration status. Due primarily to ethical limitations on the specificity of details allowed to be obtained by researchers, there was no way to compare crimes reported by active street offenders to those reported to police. As indicated through prior research, undocumented immigrants are unlikely to report victimization to law enforcement for fear of deportation. Therefore, any crimes that were reported to police fitting the circumstances of those recounted by an active street offender may have been incorrectly stereotyped as illegal. This highlights the importance of understanding and highlighting the Dark Figure of Crime among vulnerable populations. Finally, the interviews cannot be generalized to offenders outside of Atlanta, Georgia. Without further exploration of offender in other states, particularly in cities with sanctuary policies, there is no guarantee that offenders consistently target undocumented immigrants and are similarly motivated by the

equivalent vulnerabilities across geographic locations. In addition, as previously discussed, the current study cannot be generalized to white active street offenders.

### *Findings*

Despite the limitations, the results supported reports of Latino immigrant victimization by African American robbers. A segment of the active street offender population indeed targets undocumented immigrants for victimization. As expected, street offenders identified perceived immigration status, engagement in a cash economy, lack of access to law enforcement and lack of anticipated retaliation as key elements for target selection. This supports many of the hypotheses raised by scholars who interviewed undocumented immigrant victims (Bucher et al., 2010; Cepeda et al., 2012; Negi et al., 2013). The interrelationship between immigration status, engagement in a cash economy, and lack of access to law enforcement also provided support for the “Walking ATM phenomenon” and the Deportation Threat Dynamic (Fussell, 2011).

The results also reaffirmed speculation that offenders stereotype Latinos as immigrants. This is evident throughout the interviews, noting specifically that offenders described immigrants as “Mexicans,” use skin complexion and Spanish speech as indicators of immigration status, and reiterated mainstream stereotypes of “Mexicans stealing jobs.” Offenders went beyond my expectations and provided subcategories of “Mexicans” that varied on characteristics and vulnerability.

Finally, the results confirm the “interdependent predatory relationship” (Cohen & Felson, 1979) between a victim’s perceived vulnerability and an offender’s motivation. RAT addressed the targeting of undocumented Latino immigrants and provided the perfect framework for explaining this phenomenon. First, in consolidating a sizable portion of the literature on undocumented immigrants, I provide a synthesized list of immigrant poly-vulnerability. The



combination of their multiple vulnerabilities provides a concrete illustration of a population of suitable targets. Active street offenders explicitly discussed immigrant vulnerability in combination with their immigration status resulting in their lack of access to law enforcement (formal guardianship). Interestingly, while Reynald (2010) reported that social cues such as “clothing, physical appearance, and ethnicity” (p.24) were the least mentioned characteristics among potential guardians for identifying an offender, these characteristics were frequently mentioned by offenders as cues for selecting a victim. This relationship warrants further exploration in future studies. Finally, these interviews highlighted the characteristics that embody undocumented immigrants as an “optimal opportunity” and the resulting influence on offender motivation on those seeking “easy money.”

#### *Theoretical Dilemma: Routine Activities Theory versus Rational Choice Theory*

Understanding immigrant victimization by employing active street offenders posed a theoretical dilemma, on whether to frame the discussion around Routine Activities or Rational Choice Theory. Routine Activities Theory, a victimization oriented perspective, presented the opportunity to discuss undocumented immigrants’ vulnerabilities from a macro-level perspective that intersected their suitability as a target, their relationship to potential guardians, and unique factors that influence offender motivation. Research on the victimization of undocumented immigrants has utilized this theory, however the rationale for utilizing this approach has not been addressed in depth in previous research. Alternatively, a good deal of active offender research has used Rational Choice Theory, which is a micro-level perspective that treats offenders as rational decision makers who weigh the benefits and risks of each contemplated offense to make a calculated choice regarding who to victimize and when. The use of active street offenders in this project lends itself to a micro-level theoretical approach. However, this incurred drawbacks.

First, this thesis identified victim vulnerabilities in previous literature that may or may not have been considered by offenders. Each of the studies that identified these vulnerabilities used Routine Activities Theory and merging the vulnerabilities into one category (i.e. suitable target) allowed for congruence with previous literature. Using a Rational Choice Framework would limit vulnerabilities to only the offender's perspective. As Wright and Decker (1994) state, "rationality is shown by offenders is of a 'bounded' or 'limited' variety...that is, it does not take into account all of the information theoretically available to them." (p. 197). Second, developments in Routine Activities Theory have expanded the concept of guardianship into three parsimonious categories: informal, semi-formal, and formal. Offenders are likely to only concern themselves with being arrested, therefore the analysis would remain focused on formal guardianship if framed using Rational Choice. Wright and Decker (1994) also pointed out that rational choice explanations fail "to take account of the wider cultural context in which offenders decide to commit their offenses." (p. 197). This is imperative to this point because undocumented immigrants are subject to broader forms of victimization by mainstream society as a whole, therefore the theoretical framework would focus too narrowly on the attitudes of offenders; exclusive of their embedded place within society.

Finally, there was the potential to utilize elements of Rational Choice Theory under the Motivated Offender category of Routine Activities Theory. Research has long criticized the "assumption" of a motivated offender and this provided an opportunity to merge victim and offender orientated theoretical frameworks. This thesis contributes to the literature by identifying vulnerabilities obtained from victim interviews and using offender interviews to support or challenge the current body of literature. In this way, the macro-level aspects of immigrant

vulnerability merged with the micro-level consideration of offender motivation to provide a hybrid framework.

### *Future Directions*

The next study will look at street victimization from the perspective of the undocumented Latino immigrants who have experienced victimization. This is similar to the process seen in Jacobs, Topalli, and Wright (2000) versus Topalli et al. (2002). The first study looked at the offender, the second studied victims. Since this is the first study to look at the victimization of undocumented immigrants from the offenders' perspective, it would be the first of its kind to look at victims and offenders' responses toward the targeting of undocumented immigrants in the same location. The follow up study will also provide additional data to surveys already collected from undocumented victims and may be used for comparative purposes going forward.

Future studies may also seek to expand on this study's limitations and research the perceptions of white active street offenders, employers who exploit migrant labor, fraudulent immigration lawyers, and the like. Insight into different perceptions of offender who target undocumented immigrants may reveal similarities and points of comparison in perceived vulnerability, means of victimization, and anticipated legal consequences.

## **Chapter VII: Conclusion**

A critical question remains to be addressed, “Why is victimization of undocumented immigrants by active street offenders important?” While some may make the cynical argument that “undocumented immigrants should not be in the country anyway,” consider some of the effects that targeting “immigrants” has on the general population.

The merging of law enforcement and immigration enforcement have created a steady supply of victims for active street offenders to target. This increases the likelihood of stereotyping based on ethnicity, provides consistent cash flow to the underground economy in an increasingly cashless society, and perpetuates an imbalanced judicial system that punishes victims more harshly than offenders.

A key finding in this study was that offenders use stereotypes to identify potential targets. Stereotyping, obviously, is an unreliable tool for distinguishing a nonvisible characteristic such as immigration status. Regardless of how confident offenders are in their ability to distinguish “legals” from “illegals,” this technique puts average citizens, particularly those of Latino descent, at higher risk for violent victimization. As discussed in the limitation section, there is no way to cross check if the victim reported the incident, which may act as a potential proxy for immigration status.

Second, if active street offenders are correct in assuming their victim’s immigration status, then there is the potential to account for a significant portion of the dark figure of crime. Providing an outlet for reporting victimization without repercussion would provide significant insight into the actual crime rates of not just immigrants but other criminalized groups. In addition, it could potentially clarify many aspects of scholarly debate including the frequency with which undocumented immigrants are offenders, victims, or both. Improved quality data on

this phenomenon could also produce policies based on empirical evidence over stereotypes and perceived threat.

As previously discussed, offenders are a subculture within the larger society and may be utilizing society's anti-immigrant sentiments to justify victimization. As one offender remarked, even if he ended up in jail, his victim would be deported. The labyrinth of immigration policies and anti-immigrant rhetoric creates confusion over immigrants' rights and sends the message that victimization of this population, not only by street offenders but also by unscrupulous employers, fraudulent immigration lawyers and others, is sanctioned. Allowing undocumented victims to report victimization without fear of legal action against them would provide law enforcement with stronger relationships to immigrant communities which, in turn, would provide officers with additional cooperation with criminal investigations (Provine et al., 2016). In addition, allowing reporting without repercussion provides a means of ensuring that undocumented victims of crime are not more severely punished for reporting their victimization than for the offenders who perpetrated it.

Finally, the funds and goods stolen from victims help to fuel the underground economy which affects mainstream society. Indirectly sanctioning the victimization of undocumented immigrants also sanctions the use of the cash and items stolen from victims to fund illicit activities. Reducing an offender's motivation by removing a key element of their target's appeal, the lack of access to formal guardianship, may decrease the frequency with which crimes are committed because it would no longer present that "opportunistic" target. Immigrants and those suspected to be immigrants may still be targeted, but just as some offenders stated that they do not target perceived "legal" Mexicans, the possibility of reporting may increase and may lessen immigrants' overall appeal.

## Appendices

### Appendix 1: Active Offenders Interview protocol

	Questions
Consent:	<p>Today's date is (Insert Date). It is now (Insert time).</p> <p>I just asked if it was ok to record you. The recorder is now on. Is it still ok for me to record?</p> <p><b><i>*If no, stop interview immediately.</i></b></p> <p>Do you have any questions about the consent form you were just read?</p> <p>Do you agree to be interviewed for our research? <b><i>*If no, stop interview immediately.</i></b></p>
Intro:	<p>How old are you? <b><i>*If under 18, stop interview immediately.</i></b></p> <p>Are you on probation or parole? <b><i>*If yes, stop interview immediately.</i></b></p> <p>What neighborhood are you from?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ You grew up there?</li> <li>➤ Got family there?</li> </ul> <p>Do you watch the news? Why/ why not?</p> <p>How do you feel about immigration and immigrants?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Do you think immigration affects your neighborhood?</li> </ul>
Life on the Streets:	<p>We are going to talk a little about life on the streets. Is that something you and I can talk about?</p> <p><i>Please remember not to mention yourself or any people you know by their real or street names.</i></p> <p>How dangerous is life on the streets?</p> <p>What kinds of challenges do you face on the streets?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ What's the worst thing that's ever happened to you?</li> </ul> <p>Can you tell me what kinds of things you do for money?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Do you do any robbin/ slingin? <i>*Questions will adjust to criminal activity.</i></li> <li>➤ When was the last time you*?</li> <li>➤ What was the most memorable time you robbed* someone?</li> </ul> <p>How long have you been robbing* people? When/ how did you start?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Is it like a job?</li> <li>➤ How many hours in a day?</li> <li>➤ How many days a week?</li> <li>➤ Why do you do it?</li> <li>➤ Do you usually hustle close to home or go to specific areas?</li> <li>➤ How much do you make in a day or a week?</li> <li>➤ <i>*Dealing: You ever cheated Mexicans out of drugs? (If yes, why?)</i></li> </ul>

<b>Targets:</b>	<p>What kind of people do you typically rob?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Prompt, if necessary: Men, women, young, old, residents, offenders, etc.</li> </ul> <p>What do you look for in a potential target?</p> <p>Do you prefer certain kinds of people to rob?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ (If not stated previously) Have you ever targeted Mexicans?</li> <li>➤ Did you know or meet your victim before targeting them? *</li> </ul> <p><i>*Remember not to mention anyone by name.</i></p> <p>Do you prefer to target Mexicans?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Why or why not?</li> <li>➤ What are/ would be the benefits of targeting the undocumented?</li> <li>➤ How much do you score per encounter?</li> <li>➤ Will you target the same person or location multiple times?</li> </ul>
<b>Stereotyping:</b>	<p>Do you know the difference between a Latino and an undocumented person?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ How?</li> </ul> <p>What is the difference, for you, between targeting an undocumented person versus a citizen?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Do you/ would you feel guilty about robbing undocumented people?</li> <li>➤ How do you feel more generally about undocumented people?</li> </ul>
<b>Consequences:</b>	<p>Do you worry about them putting up a struggle?</p> <p>Do you worry about retaliation?</p> <p>Do you worry about your victim calling the police?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Why or why not?</li> </ul> <p>What is your opinion of the police?</p> <p>How do you avoid contact with the police?</p> <p>How do you interact with or deal with the police when they confront you?</p> <p>Is there anything else you worry about after the fact?</p>
<b>Misc.</b>	<p>Is there any other information you would like to add prior to ending this interview?</p>

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## **Vita**

Krystlelynn Caraballo was born and raised in New York. She received her Bachelors Degree in Forensic Psychology from John Jay College of Criminal Justice. Her senior year, she interned under Jeremy Travis and developed an interest in prisoner reentry and other incarcerations issues. Following Krystlelynn's 2012 graduation, she worked at the Prisoner Reentry Institute (PRI) for three years. Here, she provided programmatic support for John Jay's Prison to College Pipeline, a project she volunteered with as an undergraduate student. She maintained an active research agenda, aiding with various projects including PRI's Three Quarter House Report and research under the direction of Dr. Demis Glasford. Her first publication, Collective action from a distance (Glasford & Caraballo, 2015), discusses how distance shapes individual's view of victims of injustice and decreases motivation to engage in collective action on behalf of victims. In 2015, Krystlelynn enrolled at Georgia State University as a graduate student. In December 2017, she received her Masters Degree in Criminal Justice after completing her thesis on the victimization of undocumented Latino immigrants. She is continuing at Georgia State University to pursue her doctoral degree, focusing on the polyvictimization of undocumented immigrants.

## Copyright Permissions

# Re: Copyright Permission Request

Richard Thomas Wright <rwright28@gsu.edu>

Tue 10/17/2017 1:15 PM

To: Krystle Lynn Caraballo <kcaraballo1@student.gsu.edu>;

Cc: Volkan Topalli <vtopalli@gsu.edu>;

You have my permission. Richard

Sent from my iPad

On Oct 17, 2017, at 3:08 PM, Krystle Lynn Caraballo <[kcaraballo1@student.gsu.edu](mailto:kcaraballo1@student.gsu.edu)> wrote:

Good morning Drs. Topalli and Wright

I hope you both are well.

I would like to reprint your Foreground Based Model of Offender Decision-Making (Topalli & Wright, 2013) in my thesis. Since I describe the model under the Motivated Offender section of the Routine Activity Theory framework and suggest that undocumented immigrants fall under the "Optimal Opportunities" arena, I think a visual would be helpful to the reader.

While you are both on my committee, AYS requires that I have expressed written permission for any copyrighted material which I must submit along with my thesis. Please let me know if you have any reservations.

Thank you both in advance for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely

Krystlelynn Caraballo  
Doctoral Student  
Andrew Young School of Policy Studies  
Georgia State University

# Re: Copyright Permission Request

Volkan Topalli

Tue 10/17/2017 4:20 PM

To: Krystle Lynn Caraballo <kcaraballo1@student.gsu.edu>; Richard Thomas Wright <rwright28@gsu.edu>;

I approve. VT

--

**Prof. Volkan Topalli**

Department of Criminal Justice and Criminology

The Andrew Young School of Policy Studies

1213 Urban Life Building

Georgia State University

Atlanta GA 30302

Ph: +1 404 409 9204

<http://aysps.gsu.edu/profile/volkan-topalli/>

---

**From:** Krystle Lynn Caraballo <kcaraballo1@student.gsu.edu>

**Date:** Tuesday, October 17, 2017 at 10:08 AM

**To:** Volkan Topalli <vtopalli@gsu.edu>, Richard Thomas Wright <rwright28@gsu.edu>

**Subject:** Copyright Permission Request

Good morning Drs. Topalli and Wright

I hope you both are well.

I would like to reprint your Foreground Based Model of Offender Decision-Making (Topalli & Wright, 2013) in my thesis. Since I describe the model under the Motivated Offender section of the Routine Activity Theory framework and suggest that undocumented immigrants fall under the "Optimal Opportunities" arena, I think a visual would be helpful to the reader.

While you are both on my committee, AYS requires that I have expressed written permission for any copyrighted material which I must submit along with my thesis. Please let me know if you have any reservations.

Thank you both in advance for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely

Krystlelynn Caraballo

Doctoral Student

Andrew Young School of Policy Studies

Georgia State University

# Re: Request to Reprint "Types of Guardianship" chart

Danielle Reynald <d.reynald@griffith.edu.au>

Mon 9/18/2017 6:44 PM

To: Krystle Lynn Caraballo <kcaraballo1@student.gsu.edu>;

Hi Krystle,

Great to hear from you! Of course you can feel free to use any charts or diagrams necessary for your thesis. It sounds very interesting and I look forward to having a look at it when it is published. It's excellent to hear that the work has been useful for you.

I'll be in Philly for ASC so please introduce yourself if you see me wandering around. I'd love to hear more about your research!

And please give my best to your lovely committee members! They are a Dream Team!! Lucky you.

Best wishes,

Danielle

**Dr. Danielle M. Reynald**

Senior Lecturer | PhD Program Coordinator

School of Criminology & Criminal Justice | Griffith Criminology Institute

Griffith University - Mt Gravatt Campus Brisbane 4122 QLD Australia

**Office:** M10\_3.17 | **Phone:** +61 737 351 145 | **Mobile:** +61 456 589 886



On Tue, Sep 19, 2017 at 2:51 AM, Krystle Lynn Caraballo <[kcaraballo1@student.gsu.edu](mailto:kcaraballo1@student.gsu.edu)> wrote:

Good afternoon Dr. Reynald

I hope all is well.

My name is Krystlelynn Caraballo and I am a doctoral student at Georgia State University. My thesis looks at the vulnerability of undocumented immigrants from the perspective of active street offenders. Among my hypotheses is that victimization of undocumented immigrants by active street offenders increases due to perceived lack of guardianship from all three potential sources of guardianship. Georgia State publishes the thesis upon graduation so I am requesting permission to use your "Types of Guardianship" chart from your *Guarding Against Crime* book and have it republished (with credit, of course) upon my graduation this December.

Your research has been an incredible influence in the formation my hypotheses as well as how I approach measuring guardianship during interviews. I have heard wonderful things about you from my committee members (Drs. Richard Wright, Volkan Topalli, and Scott Jacques) and I hope to have the opportunity to meet you at ASC.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this request. Please let me know if there is any additional information I can provide.

Sincerely

Krystlelynn Caraballo

Doctoral Student

Andrew Young School of Policy Studies

Georgia State University